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THE
CHARLINCH REVIVAL:

OR,

AN ACCOUNT OF THE REMARKABLE WORK OF GRACE
WHICH HAS LATELY TAKEN PLACE AT

CHARLINCH, IN SOMERSETSHIRE.

BY THE REV. H. J. PRINCE,

LATE CURATE OF CHARLINCH.



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THE CHARLINCH REVIVAL.

It certainly does appear agreeable to the mind of God that His people should "show forth His praise?" yea that "*one* generation should praise His works to *another*, and declare His mighty acts; and that they should *speak* of the glorious honour of his majesty, and of His wondrous works." Ps. cxlv. 4, 5. This consideration has induced the writer to publish what is now presented to the reader. He does not think it sufficient that himself, and a few others with him, have beheld the wonderful works of God; but he believes it is the will of his Father that he should "*speak* of the glory of His kingdom, and *talk* of His power; to *make known* to the sons of men His *mighty acts*, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom." v. 11, 12.

The remarkable work of grace about to be described, though not sufficiently extensive perhaps to deserve the title of "revival," is, notwithstanding, so peculiar in its character as to be properly expressed by that term when divested of all ideas of extravagance and enthusiasm. It has not been without some hesitation that this title has been given to it. There is something in the term 'revival' which makes some sober-minded Christians shrink: the very word itself excites suspicion, and comes to them laden with the ideas of religious

enthusiasm, fleshly excitement, and spiritual extravagance. Nor can we wonder at it;—a revival is something *extraordinary*; and this is of itself sufficient to excite suspicion: moreover, in many of the accounts afforded to us of revivals there is so much that looks like enthusiasm, excitement, and extravagance, that may not be so, and so much that looks like them that really is so, that we may reasonably expect those should hold their judgment in suspense upon it who have not been personally present to inspect the work, or who, at least, have not known the parties under whom it has occurred, as being themselves persons who, by reason of use, have had their senses exercised to discern between good and evil. If the reader of the following tract be one of those sober-minded Christians alluded to, he is kindly requested by the writer to lay aside, as much as possible, all those preconceived opinions of it which may have been excited in his mind by the title that it bears, and to sit down to the perusal of it with an unprejudiced spirit, a spirit not previously disposed to view it in one light more than another, but open to receive from the perusal of it just that impression which the facts themselves are calculated to impart. The reader is seriously assured that in the narration the strictest attention has been given *to the truth*, lest anything in itself true should be over-stated or too highly coloured, so as to become untrue: indeed, the dread of doing this has caused the writer to keep within, rather than to pass beyond, the limits of the truth; and has also induced him to submit this account, prior to its publication, to the inspection of others besides himself who were eye witnesses of what took place, that they might detect any inaccuracy into which he might inadvertently have been betrayed. As the writer has not penned this account without much prayer and waiting upon God, so he entreats the *reader not to begin the perusal of it without the same.*

Charlinch is a small parish near Bridgwater, containing not above 200 souls. The minister under whom the revival took place undertook the care of it in July, 1840. It was his first curacy, and when he entered on it there was not,—with the exception of his own household,—so much as *one* person either converted or awakened among all the people committed to his charge. His preaching was of a kind calculated to arouse the conscience as well as enlighten the mind; and testified to all the necessity of “repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ:” the fallen state of man, and his complete ruin by nature, were set forth, the necessity of the new birth was insisted on, and the impossibility of the sinner’s being saved by his own works, duties, or morality, was strongly urged; whilst at the same time Christ was exhibited as an all-sufficient Saviour, able and willing to save to the uttermost all who should come to God by Him. The minister insisted on these truths with much earnestness and solemnity, both from the pulpit, and at the houses that he visited; but at length, when the novelty began to wear off, and the personal application of the truth was pressed on them, they grew weary of, and disgusted with it, so that the congregations thinned rapidly, and he had to endure the most painful mortification in observing that the hearts of his people, almost without exception, continued as hard, as worldly, and as selfish as they were before.

For the first twelve months it may almost be said that his labours were altogether in vain, and that all the day long he stretched out his hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people. Three persons from an adjoining parish were converted; but there did not appear to be even a stir among his own people. It was after fourteen months thus waiting, and just when it became a question whether he might be obliged, on account of peculiar domestic

circumstances, to quit the place, that about thirty persons began to express a concern for their souls. Not long afterwards the rector, a man of God, came to reside with him: it graciously pleased the Lord to unite them very closely in spirit, and to make them of one heart and of one soul, so that, though the rector did not minister, he greatly assisted the curate by his prayers, as well as strengthened his hand in God.

In October, 1841, they appointed, in addition to the weekly lecture on Friday, a prayer meeting on Tuesday evening for the awakened, and, as a few were now converted, another on the Lord's day morning for these, that they might entreat God to pour out His spirit on the people: they prayed, however, that He would *begin* His work with the *ministers* so as to make them vessels meet for their master's use. It was not long before five or six of the awakened became converted, and among them an aged couple of seventy-four and seventy-five, and a widow of eighty years of age. These they received as a token for good; so they thanked God, and took courage. In November some of their people were led to meet once a week, and pass the night together in prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost: they prayed especially that the Spirit might come with greater power on the minister, that the word from his mouth might be more mighty; and God very wisely answered this prayer, by taking His Spirit for a time entirely away. The rector and minister were so shut up that the latter could not preach, and neither of them could pray. At the prayer meeting, November 16, the power of the Spirit appeared quite gone, and the minister, in trying to expound from Isa. iv. made a miserable failure. On Nov. 19, when attempting to preach from Luke xv., he felt as if he were bereaved both of the faculties of his mind and the use of his speech: he could not possibly preach, no, nor speak to the people; in fact, he felt

so dreadfully shut up, as well as oppressed in spirit, that he was compelled to state his condition to them from the pulpit, and, instead of preaching to them, to entreat all who had praying hearts to come into the rectory and pray for him. About fifty attended, and several prayed. This very peculiar dealing of God with the minister made a deep impression upon many; it led to some heart-searching among the believers, and showed them they had been looking too much to the instrument, and too little to God: thus all were made sensible that the minister was but an earthen vessel; and the Lord's people were stirred up to pray yet more that the power of the Spirit might come on him.

On the following Sabbath, Nov. 21, there was some spirit of prayer at the meeting, though the minister still continued shut up: he preached in the morning from Ezek. iii. 26, 27: his address was directed chiefly to the praying people to encourage them to persevere in prayer and waiting upon God. In the afternoon the church was unusually full: the minister felt as if he had nothing to say: he was still shut up: in the pulpit, however, the spirit of prayer came on him, and he prayed for twenty minutes with considerable unction: he then told the congregation that he would read the text to them, Eph. v. 14, and that if the Lord were pleased to speak by him He would; and, if not, that he must hold his tongue, as he could not speak *from himself*. He had scarcely spoken these words when the Spirit came on him with power: certainly *he* did not preach; but the *Holy Ghost* preached by him. The word was not vehement, and far too solemn to be violent; but it was searching as fire, heavy as a hammer, and sharper than a two-edged sword. As the spirit proceeded to dictate, and the minister to deliver the most awful appeals to the consciences of sinners, an extraordinary stillness of spirit stole over the people: even the children in the gallery, usually a turbulent and

noisy set, seemed awe-struck, and sat looking in each others faces in silent astonishment. During the frequent pauses made in the discourse a death-like stillness pervaded the whole church, so very solemn that one almost seemed afraid to breathe lest something should be disturbed by it. Several men and women sobbed aloud; the heads of most dropped on their breast; the hearts of all were awe-struck.* At the close of the sermon the minister requested all who were deeply impressed to remain behind: about sixty did so, with whom he engaged in prayer.

The work of grace continued to go on until Dec. 5, when a separation was made between the *careless* and the *concerned*. This separation stirred up the anger of the ungodly exceedingly, insomuch that they nearly all quitted the church. About the same time also commenced a very severe persecution of those who continued to attend; for the ungodly, not satisfied with withdrawing themselves, used every effort, and employed every, even the most violent, means to prevent their awakened and converted friends and relations from attending: thus their sincerity was now put to the test, and they found themselves in a position which compelled them to "count the cost," whether they would really "forsake *all* that they had" for Christ. The consequence was that several of the awakened fell off, and one of the believers, overcome by the terrible persecution, turned back in the day of battle. This separation was not proceeded to without much prayer and fasting; nor until the minister was fully satisfied that he was following the leading of God's Spirit: it stirred up great wrath among the ungodly, and gave rise to many strange and untrue reports; but it afterwards proved most useful to the truly concerned, and was attended with many evident tokens of God's approval.

* One boy excepted.

Dec. 19.—On this day the “revival” in the *school* commenced. For fourteen months the minister had laboured no less in the school than in the church, without witnessing so much as *one* child become even serious. At length, having waited on God for guidance, and being assured it was His will, he went to the school and told the children that as they were such hardened little sinners, and would not hear him, he should speak to them no more of Jesus: in fact, he left the school for about three months, until it nearly dwindled away. On Dec. 12 and 15, he had spoken to a few of the children with some power: on this day, the 19th, the Lord directed him to announce from the pulpit that, if any persons would send their children to the school-room that evening, he would lecture to them: accordingly, about fifty were assembled. The word spoken was at first very solemn, but in a few minutes the Holy Ghost came on the minister with the most tremendous power, so that the word of the Lord was really like *fire*. About twenty of the children were pierced to the heart by it, and appeared to be in great distress; but the bigger boys still continued unmoved, and some of them even seemed disposed to laugh. In a short time, however, the word reached *them*, too, and they were smitten to the heart with the most dreadful conviction of their sin and danger: it appeared as if the arrows of the Almighty had pierced their very reins; indeed, the Lord really seemed to have made the mouth of the minister like a sharp sword; so tremendous was the power of the word then spoken. In about ten minutes the spectacle presented by the school-room was truly awful: out of 50 children present there were not so many as *ten* that could *stand upright*: boys and girls, great and small together, were either leaning against the wall quite overcome by their feelings of distress, or else bowed down with their faces hidden in their *hands*, and sobbing in the severest agony: it ap-

peared positively as if the Spirit of God was breaking their hearts into pieces like a potter's vessel. The most heart-felt anguish was written on almost every countenance that could be seen; whilst some of them looked as though they were inwardly wrung with the extent of the agony they endured. During the prayer that followed, the impression made by the Spirit became still deeper, till the walls of the school-room quite resounded with the sobs and cries of the children kneeling on the floor; and for some time after the minister had ceased to pray, they continued where they were, not *weeping*, but literally *deeply wailing*. When he left the room they followed him to the rectory, expressing their desire henceforth to forsake their sins and pleasures, and to seek the Lord. There were more than forty thus smitten with conviction; and most of them were so affected that for some time afterwards, they could scarcely speak for sobbing.

It would be impossible to express in words, the awful sense of God's presence and power which was felt by those that were in the school-room on this occasion: it made the hearts even of the converted quail, and compelled them to shrink into Christ for refuge: even *they* said they "did exceedingly fear and quake." Three of those most deeply smitten were hardened reckless boys, whom the minister had been obliged some months before to turn out of the school for their continued misconduct; after which they used to come to church, where they would sit in a pew opposite the minister, and make faces at him as he was preaching the most solemn and affecting truths. Often has he looked down from the pulpit on these boys when they were grinning at him, and said in his heart, "What *can* God bring these boys here for? surely He does not intend to convert *them*!" Now, however, the Lord's time was come for them, and His word fastened on them all with such mighty power, that they wept aloud

before the girls, who themselves stood weeping by. Four or five obtuse plough boys, who for fourteen months had been proof against both warning and entreaty, were stricken as with the arrows of the Almighty, and sobbed as though they had the hearts of women. It is probable, that out of the fifty children then present, there was but *one* who was *altogether* unaffected: this boy stood upright, with a vacant stare of stupid astonishment upon his face, in the midst of the children that were weeping around him, as though God had permitted him to come there that we might mark the contrast between one on whom His word did *not* take effect, and those on whom it *did*.

Who can possibly resist the conviction that the "*hand of the Lord* hath done this; and that the holy One of Israel, *He* hath created it?" What power less than that of the Holy Ghost could have wrought conviction, and produced humiliation such as this? Let it be remembered, too, that these same children—the greater part of them—had been taught by the same minister, warned, exhorted, and preached to in church and at school for more than *twelve months*, and never did he see *one* of them shed a tear, or even seem *seriously affected*; and yet, at length, in one *half-hour*, the souls of more than *forty* children were bowed down before God as the soul of *one* child, and their hearts moved by the Spirit of the Lord as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. Here were the *same minister*, the *same truths*, the *same place*, and the *same people*: where, then, was the difference? doubtless in the *mighty power of God*; and in the *effectual presence of His Holy Spirit*! Can any one resist the conviction that this is *God's* work? if it be not *His*; whose work is it? It certainly was not *man's*; for *man* had tried more than twelve months, and done *nothing*: it is not likely to have been the *devil's*; *he* does not usually move people to forsake their sins, and seek the Lord. No,

truly, "this is the *Lord's* doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes!"

Dec. 21.—There was a fast observed to-day of twelve of the adults who appear to be on the borders of eternal life, yet unable to enter in: most of them have been much stripped and emptied; and are now fast shut up in *unbelief*.

Dec. 25.—Christmas day. The whole body of believers spent the day in fasting and prayer. It was a most blessed day: twenty-six believers, unaccompanied by any of the unconverted, met at the Lord's table; and truly the Lord Himself was present with them. The King sat at His table, and the spikenard of His people sent forth the smell thereof, Cant. i. 12. A soft and loving spirit pervaded all the people; some seemed to be quite overflowing with the love of Jesus, and the hearts of all appeared to be knit together by the unity of the Spirit into one heart. Three of those who fasted on the 21st partook of the ordinance.

Dec. 26.—Considerable power attended the word in the school-room, though not so much as on last Sunday. The enemy of souls endeavoured this evening to imitate the work of the Spirit, by stirring up some of the children to *pretend* to feel their sins, and to *feign* weeping. Doubtless, he did this with a view to bring what was really the work of the Spirit into suspicion. The pretending children were detected, however, and sharply rebuked; and thus Satan was defeated for this time. The convictions of some of the children are becoming deeper: in others they are wearing off.

Jan. 22, 1842.—The Lord's work is prospering: there have been twenty-seven souls converted since Christmas day.

Jan. 23.—There was very great power in the school-room this evening. It was the pure *gospel* that was preached: the dying love of Jesus, His *rich mercy* and free grace, were set forth clearly and

with considerable unction; and He Himself was represented as sitting on a throne of grace, waiting to receive returning sinners; the children were invited earnestly and affectionately to come to Him *at once*, and were assured of a free pardon and complete salvation the very instant they should believe on Him. About thirty of them were deeply affected: there were not those violent emotions of sorrow that have been noticed on some occasions, when their sin and danger have been set before them, and the terrors of the Lord insisted on; but there was a silent anguish of heart, and inward agony under which the poor children, especially the bigger boys, were melted down before God into the very deepest humiliation. Their great distress seemed to arise from the dreadful sense of the *hardness of their hearts*, and from their feeling themselves utterly unable to believe on Jesus Christ, and give their hearts to Him. It would have touched a heart of stone to witness the bitter sorrow depicted in the looks and gestures of some of these poor children: they stood up as long as they could stand; but, at length, one after another, they sat down, and by the time the minister had finished his address, about thirty of them were seen bowed down with their faces hidden in their hands, whilst the tears were rolling through their fingers, and their deep but quiet sobs betrayed the agony that passed within. It really was a most astonishing as well as affecting sight to see these once proud, iron-hearted, thoughtless boys, formerly so fierce and coarse in spirit, now humbled in the most unfeigned brokenness of heart, with spirits so subdued and softened that their very language, looks, and voice were altered, so much so, indeed, that we could scarcely think they were the same individuals we had lately known so different: the spirits of the bigger lads especially, seemed to be so truly melted that they were more like little tender infants than great rough boys.

Feb. 6.—We had a pleasant season at the Lord's table. More than sixty believers communicated; so that, since we last met there, the number of the converted has more than doubled. Fourteen believing children, from nine to fourteen years of age communicated with us. On Christmas day there was not one converted: on that day when some of us were conversing together, it was asked whether it were at all probable that God would do so great a thing for us, as to bring a *dozen* of the awakened children to Christ, before we should next communicate, so that they might attend with us at the table: we knelt down and prayed to Him to do so. How good and gracious is the Lord: He did for us *more* than we either *asked* or *thought*: we asked for a *dozen*, and He gave us *fourteen*. All these dear children appeared to realize the presence of Jesus at this heavenly feast, and to feel in their hearts the sweetness of His dying love.

Feb. 8.—There have been eight persons converted in the last six days; besides one, of whom we are doubtful.

God is very good to us in every respect: the believers walk in love to one another; and, with one exception, adorn their profession by a holy life, both old and young. One or two who had been overtaken with a fault, were soon made sensible of it, and restored to God with genuine repentance.

Feb. 24.—There was a fast of the whole body of believers, and a prayer-meeting in the evening; but the spirit of prayer was entirely withdrawn, and the meeting was exceedingly devoid of life and unction. It was afterwards discovered that some of the people had broken their fast.

March 6.—The awakening power of the Spirit is being withdrawn, but His humbling work is as evidently being deepened in the hearts of those that are truly awakened. About twenty children came *to converse with us* after the lecture to-day, in great

concern: of these about fifteen are now stripped of hope in themselves, and are in a state of self-despair: twelve of them are boys from twelve to twenty years old. They do not weep much now; they are past that period of conviction, and the work of the Spirit seems to have sunk deeper than the region of the *feelings*, and to have entered that of the *will*; they are inwardly broken, stripped and emptied, so that not one single ray of hope from self dawns on them. Once they thought that their own efforts, prayers, repentance, and amendment would move God to have mercy on them; afterwards, when they discovered these could not avail them without *faith*, though they found they had no faith, and felt they could not believe *then*, yet they hoped they should be able to do so by and bye: now, however, all these expectations have vanished, their strength is wasted, and their hopes withered; they see plainly that neither their tears, prayers, repentance, or amendment can avail them without *faith*; they are deeply convinced that *without faith* it is impossible to be saved; they have tried again and again to believe on Christ, and are now fully sensible that they do not, and cannot believe, and that they never will, unless God Himself shall give them faith to do so; and, as "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," Rom. xiv. 23, and "without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6, they see nothing in their prayers, tears, repentance, or amendment that can give them hope: thus they are brought to a state of absolute self-despair, and are made to realize experimentally that their salvation depends entirely on the sovereign will of God. They are now exactly in the experience of that Scripture, "I will have mercy on whom *I will* have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom *I will* have compassion; so then it is not of him that *willeth*, nor of him that *runneth*; but of God that sheweth mercy," Rom. ix. 15, 16.

It might have touched a heart of stone to witness

the silent anguish and quiet self-despair of these poor dear boys, as they sat around the room with their heads bent down upon their breast: indeed, it almost made the minister weep to be obliged to preach to them the necessity of submitting to God's sovereign will: yet he did this; for though he was aware that it is possible to lay Christ as the foundation without necessarily passing through this experience; yet, as he also knew that no one digs so deep in laying that foundation as one who is brought to submit to God's sovereignty, and as the Spirit seemed to lead that way, he proceeded to enforce it. He therefore told them,—what, indeed, they already knew and felt,—that they were utterly ruined and undone for ever, that their ruin was so complete that none but God Himself could save them from it, and that it depended on *nothing else* than *His own will* whether he would do so; he assured them that if it were God's will and pleasure to *save* them, He *would* save them; and that if it were His will and pleasure to *destroy* them, He *would* destroy them; and to this he added, that there was nothing left for *them* to do but to *submit to this*: he therefore recommended them to give themselves up entirely and unconditionally to God's disposal, and to consent with their inmost heart to let God do with them according to his own good pleasure, whether it should be to save, or to destroy them. He did not hide from them that this was no easy task, and that their hearts would rise against it; but he positively assured them that God could enable them to do it, and he earnestly entreated them not to cease to pray until God should have brought them to an unconditional surrender to His sovereign will. This was a painful lesson to impose, and a difficult one to learn; but the poor boys said they would go home and pray to God to teach it them.

March 20.—Since the sovereignty of God has

been propounded to the children, Satan has been using the most violent efforts to make them give up seeking God altogether. He tries to persuade them that there is no such thing as faith, that religion is a fable; and that they had better not come to the lectures any more. He makes his assaults with such power, and follows them up with such perseverance, that the poor children are scarcely able to endure it; and as they are now so taken out of their own strength, and have lost the support afforded by natural hope and self-complacency, they really could not continue seeking if God himself did not hold them up. Four or five of them have been almost overcome, and have even sometimes seemed disposed to give it up altogether, being quite worn out by the force of their temptations, the hardness of their hearts, the dreadful sense of their inability to believe, and the extreme difficulty that they find in prayer. God gave the minister grace to speak to them with much power on the awful condition of the backslider: he was also enabled to encourage them still to persevere.

March 21.—There was a fast of ten of the brethren.

March 25.—Good Friday. There was a fast of the whole Church; and a prayer-meeting in the evening.

April 10.—God is pleased to teach us that conversions do not come as a matter of course. At one period we had twenty-seven of the awakened converted in twenty-seven days: lately, we have had but two converted in two months. In the last three days, however, three of the awakened have received Jesus. One of these has indeed passed through *great* tribulation. He is the first of the children who has submitted, unconditionally, to the sovereign will of God, in regard to their salvation. Ere he found peace by believing, he was

made willing to give himself up unconditionally to God, and to leave himself entirely at His disposal, to be saved or destroyed according to God's pleasure. He is one of those boys who were dismissed from the school, and who used to come to church and laugh in the minister's face. Before he was awakened he was the plague of his mother's heart: since that, however, so great has been the alteration in his conduct, that his father and mother, though themselves unconverted, could not forbear coming up to the minister together to express their astonishment and gratitude. This dear boy, once so hard and reckless, has now a spirit as soft and gentle as a dove's. His conversion came just in time to encourage the rest, who were almost worn out with waiting, and were much tempted by Satan to doubt whether it were any good to wait on.

May 1.—The Spirit has not been working so powerfully of late: however, two more of the dear boys have been brought to Jesus; one of them after a most unqualified surrender to God's sovereign will. The believers enjoyed a most blessed season at the Lord's table. Jesus Himself came and supped with them, and they with Him; and the savour of His name was as ointment poured forth.

May 4.—The minister had his licence revoked by the Bishop. Some remarks on this circumstance will be found in the ensuing part of the work.

July 24.—After the revocation of his licence, the minister did not preach in the church. He continued, however, to lecture in another place once a week to the converted, and three times a week to those under concern. God has been gradually bringing in the awakened, one after another, notwithstanding the terrible conflicts they have had to endure from Satan, the world, and their own hearts; and has also been building up the believers in the knowledge of Christ. There are still, however, about *twenty-four* of the awakened who have not yet

received Jesus: in twelve or thirteen of these the work of the Spirit is so decided as to afford us every reason to believe they will, ere long, be brought to Christ: in the others the work is more doubtful.

God has indeed been *exceedingly gracious*, both to this people and their minister, in supplying the place of the latter by one of his dearest friends, whom he has known, esteemed, and loved, for some years, and who is in truth a pastor after God's own heart, well fitted to feed his people with knowledge and understanding. The hearts, too, of the people themselves have been much drawn out in love towards this dear brother; so that the minister has the blessed satisfaction of leaving his beloved people in the care of one who really will watch for their souls. When he first received the revocation of his licence, he thought it might be a call from God for him to quit the Establishment. When he entered it, it was not to please his friends, or to please himself, but because he believed it was the *will of God*; and on this occasion he has continued in prayer and waiting upon God, to know his will, as to continuing in, or quitting it. As he was thus waiting on God for guidance, a door was opened before him for further usefulness in the Establishment, apparently by the hand of the Lord; and after still further prayer and waiting, the path became so plain that he could not doubt it was the will of God he should enter it. He therefore did so. Thus, by their devices, the adversaries have really done no more than accomplish the purpose of God, howbeit they meant not so, neither did their heart think so. They have been unintentionally instrumental, in the hands of God, in removing the minister from his place just at the very time when, his work in that place being completed, it was desirable he should be removed to some other; whilst, at the same time, his removal has made way for a

brother well fitted to *water* what the former has been used to *plant*.

There are several things connected with this work of grace which it may be interesting to notice more particularly.

1.—*The character of the preaching* under which it was effected. The preaching in the *church* was characterized chiefly by its extreme simplicity, its close and searching application to the conscience, its insisting on the complete abandonment of every hope in *self*, and its clear exhibition of *Christ*, as exactly suited to the wants of the ruined sinner, in the perfect freeness of His grace, the richness of His mercy, and the fulness of His salvation: in a word,—the sinner was made to see that he was *utterly ruined* by sin; and, when he consented to the sight of his ruin, he was made to see that he might be saved *for nothing*, simply by *believing in Jesus*. The evil of sin generally was set forth; but the sin of *unbelief* was very much enlarged on, both in the church and in the school, as being the worst, the most deadly, and in fact, the damning sin of every impenitent soul to whom the gospel might be preached. In the school, where they were nearly all awakened about the same time, the preaching varied somewhat, so as to suit the states the children happened to be in at different periods. At first it was the very vehement denunciation of God's wrath against sinners, with the most urgent appeals to the conscience, and solemn exhortations to repentance and conversion. Though this was accompanied by the exhibition of Christ as a complete Saviour, yet, for some weeks after the awakening in the school-room commenced, the characteristic feature of the preaching was the *terrors*, rather than the *mercies* of the Lord. The *breaking down* power of this was tremendous: it was as though *the Lord* were "passing by" There was "a great and strong *wind*, which rent the *mountains*, and brake in pieces the *rocks*

before the Lord." "But the Lord was not in the wind." The character of the preaching then changed a little: "After the wind there was an *earthquake*: the souls of these poor sinners were made to tremble at the discovery of their dreadful danger, the conviction of their complete ruin, and the certainty of their everlasting destruction. "But the Lord was not in the earthquake." There was now another change in the character of the preaching: after the earthquake there was a *fire* which quite consumed all their self-righteous hopes of salvation, founded on their own prayers, repentance and amendment, and reduced them to a state of hopelessness and self-despair. "But the Lord was not in the fire." At length the character of the preaching changed decidedly: after the fire there was a *still small voice*,—the voice of mercy through the blood of Jesus, which was now and then applied by the Spirit to some weary and heavy-laden sinner, so as to give him rest. 1 Kings, xix. 11, 12.

The reader is not to suppose from this account that *Christ* was not preached more or less all along: it certainly did appear, however, as if God made use of the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, to prepare the way for the "still small voice;" indeed, the writer cannot remember one instance where any soul was *able to hear* this still small voice, when it was preached, unless that soul had previously been under the influence of the wind, the earthquake, and the fire; and if, as was sometimes the case, any supposed that he had heard the former without having experienced these, the peace procured was in every instance discovered to be false.

Nor must the reader imagine that this order of preaching was observed by the minister *intentionally*: so far from this, it is to be noticed that he never on one occasion preached in the *school* with *pre-meditation*: in fact, it was not the least of the many *trials of his faith*, that when he began to open his

mouth, he had no conception of what he was going to say: once, indeed, he did propose to himself to lecture on a particular subject; but before he commenced, this had quite escaped his memory, and he spoke upon another altogether different. In the *church* the minister generally preached with more or less premeditation; sometimes, but very rarely after the first twelve months, from notes: certainly, the most powerful sermons were usually those preached without any premeditation. His chief *preparation* for preaching was *fervent* and *long-continued prayer, for the Holy Spirit* with *frequent fasting*, and the giving of himself *wholly* to these things. At first he often wished to premeditate before lecturing in the school, and waited upon God respecting it; but the Spirit would not suffer him on any occasion to do so: at length he gave up the desire, and sought to yield himself entirely to the guidance of the Spirit at the time of lecturing, that He might work with him, and speak by him, according to His own will. This was no slight trial of his faith; but he ever found that the more fully he was able to *let go himself*, and depend *upon the Spirit simply*, the more effectually did the Spirit help him, and so much the greater power, unction, and application were there in the word thus spoken.

The preaching was always exceedingly simple, but most solemn; usually in short sentences where every word was full of weight; whilst so peculiar an unction accompanied it, that the same ideas, and even expressions were frequently repeated without losing any of their power or impressiveness by the repetition. When the 'terrors of the Lord' were preached, it was usually with rapidity of utterance; and so *quick* and *powerful* was the word, that it might with truth be said, it was "sharper than any two-edged sword;" for it really did appear to "*pierce even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow.*" Heb. iv. 12.

When the ‘mercies of the Lord’ were proclaimed, the style of the preaching was gentle and persuasive. The doctrine of justification by faith without works was set forth with peculiar clearness; so distinctly was this precious truth opened out, that every sin-stricken soul was made to see, that notwithstanding all its iniquity and unworthiness, it might have a free, full, and complete salvation *on the very instant it should believe on Jesus*. On these occasions, whilst the free grace, rich mercy, and tender compassion of Christ for poor sinners were glowingly exhibited, and they were earnestly invited to come *at once*, and have eternal life *for nothing*, the danger, dreadful consequences, and horrible iniquity of *unbelief* were much enlarged on. It may be mentioned, that the earnestly assuring them that they might have pardon, peace, and salvation *at once*, and have them all *for nothing*, and the repeatedly exhorting them to receive them *now* without any further waiting, by a simple faith in Jesus, were always attended with a deep and powerful impression on those that were awakened, and appeared to draw out their souls in fervent longings after Jesus more than anything.

2. *The character of the convictions.* This was somewhat different in the children from what it was among the adults: in the latter, the *conscience* appeared to be reached through the *understanding*; in the former, the convictions seemed to be produced independently of the understanding: the word appeared to strike their hearts like an arrow, going *direct to the conscience*, without—if we may so speak, stopping at all at the understanding. The convictions were more spiritual, too, among the children, if we may judge from the fact that what they chiefly felt was the sin of their *nature*, rather than of their *actions*. Though particular sins, as lying, sabbath-breaking, disobedience to their parents, swearing, &c. were, by the Spirit, laid upon their

conscience, yet it was not so much of *actual* sin they were convinced, as of the *sinful condition of their hearts*. When asked, *what* it was they felt, they replied, that they had "such wicked hearts," that "God was very angry with them," and that "He would surely send them to the wicked place." Their terror at God's wrath was what most distressed them at first; but afterwards, and, as the Gospel was more opened to them, and they were invited to come to Jesus, and be saved at once, this extreme terror passed away, and their distress then arose from their not being able to come to Christ and give their hearts to Him. The hardness of their hearts, and their distance from God were the sins they chiefly felt at this period; and the more they tried to come to Christ, the harder their hearts appeared to grow, and the further off from God they felt themselves to be; indeed, the anguish they suffered under the preaching of the Gospel, from the dreadful sense of *hardness of heart*, and *inability to come to Jesus*, was much more painful than that produced by their *terror at the dread of God's wrath*. One remarkable feature in the history of their conviction was that they were so soon, and so deeply convinced of the *sin of unbelief*. This sin seemed at length to swallow up all other sins; and prior to their being brought to Christ they were all quite "shut up in unbelief," "shut up unto the faith that should afterwards be revealed." Rom. xi. 32. Gal. iii. 23.

3. *The character of the conversions*. This was very decided: as their convictions were attended with unusually clear discoveries of sin and danger, so were their conversions with unusually clear views of Christ and His salvation. Before they were able to receive Christ, they were always brought to a state of hopelessness and self-despair. For a time after they were first awakened they thought they *could do something* to help themselves by their own

efforts, prayers, and repentance; but whilst they were in this condition they could never receive Christ even when He was set before them: ere they were able to do so, they were stripped of their own righteousness, and taken off of every hope in themselves: they were also convinced of being in a state of unbelief, and of their utter inability to believe, before they *could* believe; and thus were taught experimentally that *by grace* they must be saved, through faith;—and that *not of themselves*, but by the *gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. When they *were* able to come to Christ as ruined sinners, they invariably found *rest* unto their souls: as soon as they could really look unto Him, they were healed in that very hour; their fear of God's wrath, and dread of punishment, were immediately removed, for, being justified by faith, they had peace with God, and forgiveness of their sins in the blood of Christ; instead of being kept at a distance from God, they were now able to draw near to Him with confidence, to call him 'Father,' and to hold communion with Him as their friend; they also lost that distressing sense of hardness of heart, for the love of God was now shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, whereby they were both softened and subdued. All these things they not only knew with the head, but experienced in the heart; indeed, until they knew them by *experience* they had no acquaintance with them.

The minister was always extremely careful to examine closely into the *character of their peace* when they first found it: his principal object was to discover whether it had come really by *faith in Christ*; or had been produced by some subtle acting of a *self-righteous spirit*, leading them to depend unconsciously on any change in their feelings, their being able to pray better, or any impression made on their imagination. He felt it better in doubtful cases, to err on the side of keeping them back a

little too long, than of admitting them too soon as believers; the evil consequences attending the latter are many and very serious, whereas, *waiting* never did them any harm, whilst it exercised their patience, meekness, and humility. Among the adults instances of *false peace* were not uncommon; and it was remarked, that it was generally just when they began to be *convinced of unbelief*, that the enemy laid this snare for them: it was usually spread in the form of some encouragement in prayer, a light in the mind, a voice assuring them of forgiveness, a mental persuasion, or some impression made on the imagination. When their error and its consequences were clearly pointed out to them, if they did not receive what was said, and let go the hope and peace they had obtained, but continued to cling to them, they in every instance, without one exception went back, and fell into a state of confirmed carnal security and spiritual death. When they were willing to see their error, and abandoned their hope and peace, they usually soon found a solid and abiding peace, by a real faith in Christ; and then they could not sufficiently express their gratitude, at having been delivered from so great a danger.

Among the *children*, though some of them said that Satan often tempted them to say they were converted when they were not, yet cases in which they were really deceived as to their state were very rare. The most remarkable was that of C. C., an intelligent boy, ten years old. He stated to the minister, that he had been made to feel his sins seven or eight days before, in the school, that he had ever since felt the weight of his sins, the fear of God's wrath, how hard his heart was, and how far he was from God, and that all this made him pray a good deal, but that he was told by one of the believing children, that, "all this would not do, and that he could not be saved if he did not believe on Jesus Christ." This made him *feel his sins still more*: on the same evening, how-

ever, he had a light come into his mind, when he saw the figure of a cross, with Christ upon it, and the blood flowing out of His side: on the following day, when at the lecture, he saw the same again, when all his sins went away; he felt quite happy, was sure his sins were forgiven, and that he should go to heaven if he died. The poor boy told all this with great simplicity, and appeared to have no doubt that he was a true believer, and a child of God. It was clear enough, however, that this was merely an impression made on the imagination, and that the boy was in reality depending not on *Christ*, but on his own impression; in fact, he had not been previously brought to a state of hopelessness and self-despair, nor taken off a trust in his own righteousness; he was evidently building on a false foundation. When the real character of his experience was pointed out, and he was shown that it was a delusion from the enemy, it caused him some trouble; but he said he would go home, and ask God to show it to him.

It was astonishing to observe the accuracy and precision with which the children described their feelings; they were such as could have been produced only by their speaking just what they *did feel*. If the minister expressed a suspicion respecting the truth of their statement, or tried to make them alter it, they adhered with the greatest tenacity and strictness to what they had already said; nor could the severest cross-examination detect the slightest shade of inconsistency in the account they gave of their experience. The following interesting case will supply an illustration. J. S., twelve years old, having been under conviction about two months, came to the minister one Wednesday morning, when the following dialogue ensued. *Minister*. Well J—, how is your soul to-day? *Boy*. Very wicked sir.—*M*. How do you feel now? *B*.—My heart is very heavy sir; and God is very angry with me, and

I am afraid I shall go to the wicked place.—*M.* Do you think you are any better than you were *J*——?
B. Yes sir. This reply rather startled the minister as the awakened, up to the period of their being brought to Christ, always felt as if they were growing worse and worse, and became more and more sensible of the hardness of their hearts, and how far they were from God; and when they thought they were getting better, if they had not been brought to the Lord, it invariably arose from their feeling their sins less, in consequence either of a false peace, or of their neglecting prayer, and losing their concern. The minister therefore asked him—What makes you think you are getting better *J*——?—*B.* Because I have felt that I could love God. This also looked suspicious.—*M.* Why do you love God?—*B.* Because He sent His Son to die for me; and His blood has washed away my sins.—*M.* Could you always believe that Jesus Christ died for you, and that His blood would take away your sins?—*B.* No sir; but I can now. The apparent inconsistencies of the boy's replies, and the difficulty of reconciling what he said about God being angry with him, and yet loving him, his sins being taken away, and his still feeling the weight of them, his being able to love God, and yet being afraid that God would punish him, and his believing that Christ had suffered for his sins, and yet dreading he should go to the wicked place, quite puzzled the minister, especially as the boy insisted that all he had said was perfectly correct. As he proceeded the difficulty of the case increased.
B. I was able to believe on Jesus in the school-room, sir, on Sunday evening, when you were praying.—*M.* What did you feel then *J*——?—*B.* I was able to come to Jesus, and then I felt my sins were forgiven, and that God was not angry with me any more, and I felt the love of God in my heart, and went home quite happy.—*M.* And do you *really mean to say* that you at this time feel the

weight of sin, and that you are now afraid of God, and think that He is angry with you, and will send you to the wicked place?—*B.* Yes sir.—*M.* And do you feel far from God?—*B.* Yes sir.—*M.* And cannot you come near to Him?—*B.* No sir.—*M.* Why, how can this be, *J*——?—*B.* I don't know, sir.—*M.* Surely you must be mistaken *J*——. *B.* No sir, I am not.—*M.* Are you quite sure you have told us just exactly what you felt?—*B.* Yes sir. The boy insisted that what he had said was quite correct, nor could any thing induce him to alter his account.

Never had the minister felt so thoroughly confounded; he was obliged to confess that he could not understand it. While he was looking up to God for guidance, the boy himself produced the key that unlocked the mystery. *B.* I did not feel happy long, sir.—*M.* How was that, *J*.?—*B.* When I went home on Sunday evening I found my brother swearing at my mother, and it made me very angry.—*M.* Well, what then, *J*.?—*B.* I felt I was wicked again, and I thought God was angry with me and would punish me for it; so I felt afraid of Him, and it made my heart heavy.—*M.* Do you think God is angry with you and will punish you for the wickedness you did before that?—*B.* No sir, only for this sin; all the rest are taken away. Here the difficulty ended: it was evident enough, that the poor boy had grieved the Spirit, after having believed on Christ, and that he had thus contracted fresh guilt upon his conscience, which kept him away from God. Thus all the apparent inconsistencies of the case were easily reconciled; and the boy himself, when the minister was utterly at a loss, produced the only key that could possibly unlock the mystery. Where *could* he have got this key if a *real experience* of his own had not supplied it? He was directed to the blood of Christ as that which would take away this, no less than his former sins: he was also told, that if his

peace should have been restored before the hour at which the believers met in the evening, he was to come and join them; if not, he was not to come that evening. He did not make his appearance. On the following morning, the minister found him in the school-room looking very happy: being asked why he did not come up, he said, he had not found Jesus again till that morning, that he got up at six o'clock and prayed on till he could come to Jesus, and that he then had peace, and the love of God came back again. This dear boy has a soft and lamb-like spirit, and exhibits a beautiful specimen of youthful godliness. It was he who told the boy before spoken of, that "all his prayers would not do, and that he could not be saved, if he did not believe on Jesus Christ."

The period during which the awakened continued under conviction, was generally from two to six months: in almost every case, though certainly not in *all*, the transition from guilt and misery to pardon and peace, was sudden and even instantaneous. Among the children especially, the apprehension of Christ, and the view of His grace and mercy were so clear, as to leave no doubt on their own minds, that their sins were really forgiven; and in every instance, when they believed, they received the Spirit of adoption, whereby they were able to cry 'Abba, Father;,' and the Spirit itself bore witness with their spirit, that they were the children of God. One of them, a girl, thirteen years old, having found the Lord one evening, passed the night in great blessedness: in the morning, she told her mother, how very full of joy she was: the mother, being then under deep conviction herself, shut up in unbelief, and just ready to doubt whether there were any such thing as *faith* at all, would not believe her, and bade her not tell stories; to which the daughter replied, very solemnly—"Mother, if *no one* will believe it, *God believes it*. Whilst under conviction, she was in the

habit of going to a lady four times a-week, to receive religious instruction: the lady being a strenuous defender of the views of Dr. Pusey, taught the child that she had been 'born again' at her baptism. The girl continued to attend on her till she found the Lord, when she became fully convinced that she had never been 'born again,' before the Friday evening when she believed on Jesus: afterwards, having prayed to Christ to give her strength,—for it was no slight trial for the poor child,—she went to the lady, and, having thanked her for the trouble she had taken, told her that she was converted now, and that she could not come to her any more. To this the lady replied by telling her she was in great danger, and assuring her that she might be converted *fifty* times in the course of her life. The girl went to her no more. This dear child was formerly proud, intractable, and fond of dress: she is now becoming meek, gentle, submissive to her parents, and satisfied with plain attire. She was once a trouble to her mother; but is now a comfort and support to her.

The age of the youngest of those who have been converted is nine. It may not be amiss to mention here what we mean by *converted*. By this term we do not signify such as are anxiously concerned about their souls, diligent in their attendance on the means of grace, and reformed in their outward character. We did not consider the most sincere concern about salvation an evidence of *conversion*; but only of *conviction*: nor did we regard a diligent attendance on the means of grace by those who had before neglected them, an evidence of *conversion*; but only of *awakening*: and in the same light we viewed an amendment of life outwardly, not as a token of *conversion*; but of *sincerity in seeking*. All these signs *accompanied* every instance of *conversion*, and, without them, of course, we could not have received the parties as converted; but we never

looked upon them as *sufficient proofs* in themselves of *conversion*. There may be very great concern about the soul, without any real dependence upon Christ; and the individual concerned may even draw back unto perdition: we saw many such. There may be the most diligent attendance on the means of grace; and yet no worshipping of God *in the Spirit*: we saw much of this, too. There may be the most decided amendment of life outwardly; and no real change of heart inwardly; and the parties, after a time, return like a dog to its vomit, and like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire: we saw such as these, also. No, we draw a very broad line of distinction between *the awakened* and *the converted*; and we regard this distinction as *important in the highest degree*. By *the awakened* we mean those who were anxiously concerned about their souls, diligent in their attendance on the means of grace, and reformed in their outward life: by *the converted* we signify those who, *in addition to all these things*, had *been stripped of all dependence on them*, and brought as utterly ruined and undone sinners, to the cross of Christ for refuge, Matt. xi. 28; those who had really received Christ into their hearts, and, by faith in His blood, had obtained peace with God, Rom. v. 1; those who walked in the light even as He is in the light, and whose fellowship was with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, 1 John i. 7; in a word, those who were "in Christ," and so "new creatures." 2 Cor. v. 17.

The total number of those who have been fully received as converted, is 102. Of these, we have had reason to doubt the soundness of the conversion in but three cases! two, however, have been put out of fellowship with us, and three have died rejoicing in the Lord; the rest are walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost; a few of them not very spiritually-minded, most of them *with their affections really* set on things above, many

of them bringing forth *much fruit*, and all, according to the measure of grace in each, showing forth the virtues of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. In many, perhaps in most published accounts of religious awakenings when *members* have been alluded to, the allusion has usually been to those that were deeply impressed, without restricting it to such of them as went on to real conversion. Had this been done here the statement now afforded would very far fall short of what it ought to be; for certainly a great number of those who were awakened fell away after a while, the good seed that had been sown in their hearts being either caught away by the wicked one, or scorched by the sun because it had no root, or choked by the cares of this life, and the lusts of other things. Mark iv. 15—20.

In reference to this point it may be said that the grace of God has passed through this place like a *wave of the sea*. When a wave is about to break upon the beach, the sea first swells, then rises gradually until at length the waters seem to stand up like a wall, the wave is now at its greatest height, and in its glory; presently it breaks, and rolls its waters on along the shore, making no slight commotion among the pebbles on the beach, and wetting them abundantly. Ere long, however, the wave begins to retire, and as it does so, draws back with it into the ocean many of the pebbles it had wetted, whilst those it leaves behind gradually grow dry again. Just so has it been here: there has been a swell in the waters of divine compassion, and from out of the ocean of God's mercy has rolled a *wave of grace* which has burst upon the beach at Charlinch: its first breaking was on December the 19th, when the power of the Spirit was at its height; having broke, it then rolled on, causing a great rustling among the souls that lay like pebbles on the shore, and wetting them abundantly with its waters.

It was through the school-room especially, that this wave passed, and so powerful was the impression produced by it that perhaps there were not half-a-dozen children came to the school—and they came from the surrounding neighbourhood—who were not more or less affected by it, the awakening was so general. At length, however, the wave began gradually to retire, and, as it did so, it produced a *separation* between the souls it had wetted with its waters; many it carried back with it into the ocean of God's mercy, whilst it left the rest upon the land of unbelief where the sunshine of prosperity, and the atmosphere of earthly-mindedness soon dissipated what serious concern they had, and they became as dry and as devoid of piety as they had been before the waters of this gracious wave passed over them. Whilst the wave was rolling onward to the beach many were wetted by its waters and sprinkled by its spray, who, notwithstanding, were not drawn back into the ocean by it. Before it began to *retire* it was difficult to judge who among the many that were affected by it were savingly awakened; the feelings of nearly all were more or less moved, and their consciences alarmed under the extraordinary power put forth by the Spirit: but as the wave receded, a *separation* was produced among the souls awakened, and, as the waters continued to retire, the distance between those *superficially*, and those *savingly* awakened, gradually grew greater, the former passing into a state of indifference and worldly-mindedness, whilst the latter became more concerned about themselves, and more anxious after Christ, and were eventually borne by the receding waters into the unfathomable abyss of God's everlasting love.

4. *The character of the opposition met with.* That a work of this kind could be carried on without much opposition would be expected by none who are acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus: "*the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit*

against the flesh ; and these are contrary the one to the other." Gal. v. 17. When the *Spirit* works, the *flesh* will work in opposition to it ; and the more powerfully the Spirit works, the more vigorously will the flesh work too, to oppose it. Not only cannot flesh and blood inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. xv. 50 ; but they will also do their best to keep out of it what can. Hence where God is bringing many sons unto glory, we may reasonably look for a great opposition from the flesh : it was so here. It was not, however, from flesh and blood only that we met with opposition : we had to "wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephes. vi. 12. The opposition referred to may be noticed under three heads. 1. From the temptations of Satan. 2. From the delusions of Satan. 3. From the persecutions of the world.

1. The temptations of Satan. These were common and peculiar. All whilst under conviction were tempted more or less to "give it up," to yield to the persuasion that they never could be saved, to neglect prayer, and to stay away from Church. Many of them, especially among the children, when brought to a state of hopelessness in themselves were so severely tempted to think it was no good to go on using the means of grace, that it was with the greatest difficulty they could drag themselves to Church, or persevere in prayer. Besides these temptations of an ordinary kind, there were some that were peculiar, and sometimes very fearful. Persons under conviction were violently urged by Satan to self-destruction. Doubtless the object of the enemy in thus assaulting the awakened, was to deter them from continuing to seek Christ, and, if possible, to lead them by self-destruction to destroy both body and soul at once, ere they had escaped him for ever ; and, had he succeeded, he would v-

doubt have made use of his success to bring an evil report upon the work, and to terrify others from following out their convictions when they began to feel them.

2. The delusions of Satan. Satan can take any form: at one time he will torment like a devil; at another, seduce like an angel; and never is the prince of darkness so much to be dreaded, as when he transforms himself into an angel of light, for then neither his presence nor his purpose are suspected. One of the first delusions he practised on us, was that which he attempted on the Sabbath succeeding the one when the great awakening took place in the school room: on that occasion he stirred up some of the children to *feign sorrow* for their sins, and to weep as those did who really felt them. The children having been detected and sharply rebuked, he tried another plan: a boy presented himself as being under conviction, and wished to be received among those who intended to forsake their sins and seek the Lord: he did not evidence any real concern, and was therefore dismissed: he then went to the next parish and circulated a report that he had been converted at Charlinch, and might now live as he liked; and shortly afterwards fell into such a course of wickedness that they were obliged to turn him out of the school to which he belonged. On another occasion, a girl came up and stated, that after having been in trouble about her soul, she had on the preceding sabbath found peace by believing on Christ: the account she gave was for the most part similar to that given by the other children; there was, however, a want of that peculiar simplicity in it which we always found connected with the truth; though it came so near the truth that it called for special waiting upon God to know how to treat it: at length she betrayed herself by saying, she had *never felt any difficulty in believing on Christ*;

which proved she had never been convinced of the sin of unbelief: it was afterwards found that she was known in the parish from whence she came as a notorious liar. There can be little doubt that the intention of the enemy in these attempts to produce imitations of the work of grace, was to mix up what was false with what was true, and so bring discredit upon all. As in his own experience the minister had been taught something of the devices of Satan, he was the more upon his guard against such delusions.

The third, and most frequent form of delusion was that of a *false peace*, i. e. a peace arising out of something else than a *real faith* in Jesus Christ. When the Spirit works chiefly on the *understanding*, and not so powerfully on the *conscience*, the awakened person is very likely to try to obtain peace by his own prayers, and duties, his amendment of life, change of mind, and diligent attendance on the ordinances he formerly neglected; and he may, and, indeed, many do, succeed in doing so, though from the deceitfulness of the heart, they do not suspect *what* it is that gives them peace. In such cases therefore, the minister has particularly to watch against that form of self-righteousness which would lead the sinner to find comfort and satisfaction in his prayers, duties, amendment, &c., and thus to rest, without being aware of it, in *them* instead of *Christ*. It is the opinion of the writer that a vast number of persons are deceived in this way who do not know it. When, however, the Spirit works chiefly and powerfully on the *conscience*, as was the case here, the wound is too deep to be healed by any such means, so that the awakened person is unable to find rest in any duties or amendment of life, and is made to feel the need of looking beyond all these to something else for peace, even to the blood of Christ. Now it is that he begins to learn by experience the absolute necessity of believing

on Christ in order to be saved ; and he learns, too, by many and repeated, but ineffectual efforts to believe, that he cannot do it of himself, and that faith is the " gift of God." Thus he is by the Holy Ghost convinced of sin, because he believes not on Christ ; John xvi. 9, and is kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which shall afterwards be revealed to him. Gal. iii. 23. It was just at *this* stage of their experience that Satan usually attempted to delude them with a false peace. In every case where the peace obtained by the awakened person was sound, it was the result of *an act of faith on Christ* ; but when false it was the result of an act of the *imagination*, or the *reason*. An instance of such delusion through the imagination has been already given. Page 27. Among the adults there were many such. Sometimes Satan would present to their imagination a figure of Christ bleeding on the cross, or with a smile on His face, accompanied with a beautiful light shining into their mind ; and he would then lead them to imagine that this was that knowledge of Christ and His dying love of which they had heard others speak ; thus he would cause them to think that they did know Christ now, and that this would save them. At other times he would so excite their imagination as to make them fancy they heard a voice telling them distinctly that their sins were forgiven them ; and then they would receive this as coming from Christ himself, and so persuade themselves that they really were forgiven.

In these various ways did Satan try to delude them through the imagination : he did so through the reason also. When they were in great darkness a beam of light might shine on them, or when almost in despair a gleam of hope might encourage them, or when shut up in hardness of heart, they might unexpectedly find themselves able to pray with fervour and feeling, or perhaps some particular text might be brought with power to their hearts and

cheer them. Either of these would afford them some comfort and encouragement, and then Satan would lead them to reason on this, and to draw the conclusion from it that they were now in a more hopeful state, and that this comfort and encouragement were the peace and joy that followed on believing. This itself would give rise to a peace and a confidence towards God, false, of course, because not grounded on a real dependence on the merits and death of Christ, but on their own improved state and better feelings. When they found a solid peace it was not by a dependence on any thing they beheld through the imagination, or felt in their hearts, or heard with their ears, but by a *dependence upon Jesus Christ himself*, in His righteousness and bloodshedding as having suffered, "the just for the unjust." 1 Pet. iii. 18. Their joy and peace were *in believing*. Rom. xv. 13. In too many cases Satan succeeded in his object: when the nature of the delusion, and its consequences were pointed out to them by the minister, if they would not consent to see their error, and suffer the loss of the peace they had obtained, they then became self-satisfied, lost their convictions and anxiety, and in every instance became hardened in conscience, and at length fell back into a state of worldly-mindedness and carnal security. But when they were willing to come to the light, and have their error detected, their convictions returned, their desires after Christ increased, and they were generally soon brought to a solid peace by faith in His blood.

If Satan was thus busy with the awakened, he was not idle among the converted. He first endeavoured to create envyings and jealousies among the servants of the household; being defeated there, he turned his attention to the rest of the family, and tried to infuse hard and suspicious thoughts of one another into the minds of those who were before dwelling in love; being dragged into the light he

was utterly confounded here, when he insinuated himself among the believers generally, where he diligently set to work to cause divisions and sow discord among them. After much prayer and fasting, however, he was disappointed here, too, and the believers were brought into more unity and love than ever.

3. Persecutions from the world. "If the world hate you, 'said Christ to his disciples,' ye know that it hated me before it hated you." John xv. 18. Our Lord did not lead His people to suppose that they would meet with better treatment from the world than He himself did. "Remember, 'adds He,' the word that I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord: if they have persecuted *Me*, they will also persecute *you*: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." v. 20. Some who contrive to escape this hatred and persecution from the world, and at the same time to maintain a religious profession, would restrict the application of such passages to the early ages of Christianity; but the Scriptures strictly assure us that, "*all* who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. iii. 12.

The persecution here has been very severe: Satan has mightily stirred up the minds of worldly people to be evil-affected towards the brethren; whilst the division produced in families by the truth's taking hold of some of the members of them, excited so violent an opposition against these in the minds of the rest, that the exasperation of the latter arose to such a pitch, as to cause them to treat with the most bitter cruelty and unkindness, those that had been the nearest and dearest to them, and sometimes even to put them in danger of their lives. "Think not, 'saith Christ,' that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace; but a sword; for I am come to set a man at variance against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-

in-law against her mother-in-law ; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Matt. x. 34, 36. Where the power of the Gospel is really felt it cannot but produce a separation between the godly and the ungodly ; and so prevailing is its power that the very strongest ties of nature cannot withstand it. The opposition of the ungodly was first exhibited in their strenuous endeavours to prevent their friends and relations from coming to hear the Word, and from following out their light. When they found they could not prevail by fair means they then used foul, and threats took the place of entreaties ; when both were alike useless the anger of the irritated parties knew no bounds, and a furious and determined hostility against the truth, and all who embraced it, took possession of their hearts. Husbands threatened to murder their wives, and wives threatened to forsake their husbands, if they would not give up going to Charlinch. Nor did the converted children escape : some were coaxed, others frightened by their parents ; whilst their unconverted brothers and sisters seemed to take a savage delight in turning them into ridicule, and in trying to provoke them that they might lose their temper. Some of the converted children used to curse and swear before their conversion, and when by the grace of God they gave it up, even their little brothers and sisters would actually set themselves to irritate them, in order to make them swear again, and, on their anger and contempt being met with mildness, would grow more angry still, and tell them they were determined that they *would* make them swear by and bye.

The persecution did not stop here, however : we were troubled on *every* side. It appeared as if the enemy would not leave one instrument untried by which he might be able to shake the purpose of the awakened, or the faith of the converted : all sects and parties, and all kinds of people, came upon us as

once, as though they would eat up our flesh. Nor were these the only impediments that presented to keep back our people from the truth: at one time, when the awakening became general, the very elements themselves seemed to be in league against us; there was such a continuance of fierce winds and floods of rain as one would have deemed sufficient to deter almost any one from coming on a winter's night: the water in the road through which the people had to pass was sometimes more than knee deep, yet they were not thereby prevented from attending: indeed, some of our largest congregations have been on the most stormy nights, and even females were not deterred by the darkest nights, and most tremendous weather, from walking two or three miles to attend the lectures and prayer meetings.

One form in which the persecuting spirit displayed itself was in the spreading of the most absurd and infamous reports concerning our people; they reviled them, and persecuted them, and said *all manner* of evil against them falsely for His sake, Matt. v. 11; and, in order that there might be more appearance of truth in the accusations brought against them, their persecutors would often bring up old sins that had been committed before the parties were converted, or even awakened, and speak of them as though they had been *lately* done, that by their being able to state positively that the sins really had been committed they might give more of the semblance of truth to what was really false, and so gain greater credence for themselves, and bring more disgrace upon the cause of Christ. Indeed, so diverse, ridiculous, and malicious, were the falsehoods circulated, that it would take less time to tell what evil was *not* said than what *was*.

If the believers generally were treated thus roughly, the ministers themselves were used still more so: it was meet that they should approve themselves as the *ministers of God* in much patience, in afflictions, in

necessities, in distresses, 2 Cor. vi. 4; and truly they had abundant opportunity to do so. The curate especially—"because he was the chief speaker"—became the object of their greatest animosity; nor were they satisfied until, by their representations and misrepresentations, both to the Bishop and Archbishop, they had succeeded in prevailing on the former to revoke his licence. It is right to mention that before the Bishop actually took this step, he called on the curate to *resign* the curacy. This, however, he could not consent to do; for, having waited on God for guidance, he was shown distinctly that he could not, in accordance with the will of God, or consistently with His glory, take one step *voluntarily* to quit a position in which the Lord Himself had evidently placed him, and where also He had abundantly blessed him, and was still blessing him; for at the time this proposal was made there were between thirty and forty persons still under conviction, many of them in very deep distress, who were supported in their temptations chiefly by the confidence they had in him. The principal charges alleged against him by the Bishop were,—that he visited persons in other parishes than his own, that he admitted (the converted) children to the Lord's table who had not been confirmed:—the youngest of them was in his tenth year,—and that he *recommended* several respectable (but unconverted) persons to remain away from it. The curate certainly thought that he was hardly dealt with in having his licence revoked upon these grounds, especially as it appeared to himself, and to men of sober judgment who were acquainted with the facts, that he had done nothing in these particulars that was contrary to the rubric; and as he had promised the Bishop that some other things, wherein he had through ignorance offended, should not be repeated; those in authority, however, thinking otherwise, he had no other path to pursue *than to submit* quietly to God's will in the affair, and

to leave the *consequences* entirely to Him. This, by the grace of God, he was enabled to do; and he afterwards continued to meet, and minister to the people privately. Thus he has been "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

The character of the work as tried by Scripture. So remarkable a work as that described could not be carried on without exciting some attention: it has been 'noised abroad,' and various have been the observations made respecting it. Those who have heard of it have been 'all amazed;' men of serious and sober minds, when told of such extraordinary things, have been 'in doubt' concerning it, and have said, one to another, 'what meaneth this?' whilst the ungodly have met it universally with contempt and ridicule, except in those cases where the change of life produced in those connected with, or known to them, has compelled them to acknowledge the presence of a power they could not comprehend. It was even so on that remarkable occasion, "when the day of Pentecost being fully come, the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." This was noised abroad, and the multitude came together, "and they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, what meaneth this? Others, mocking, said, these men are full of new wine: but Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said, ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words, for these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day; but *this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel*, and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." Acts *iii.* 12—17.

That those who are without the Spirit should deny the presence and power of the Spirit is not remarkable, because it is consistent with their state. The world "cannot receive the Spirit of truth because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him," John xiv. 17. In Peter's day, when the Holy Ghost descended in extraordinary power and visible display, *they mocked*, saying, "these men are full of new wine;" and in our day, when He descends but in ordinary power, and without visible display do they mock, saying, these men are full of new folly, full of some new conceit, excitement, or enthusiasm! How should it be otherwise, seeing that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. But it is not so with those that are spiritually enlightened: they acknowledge His power, and discern His presence when He works in an ordinary way; and when any extraordinary work attributed to Him is brought before them, their chief consideration is whether it be *really His*, or not. The *ordinary* work of the Spirit they can readily receive, for it is what they are accustomed to; but as the constitution of the human mind is such that anything *extraordinary* excites suspicion in it, it is only what might be expected that when the Spirit works in an *extraordinary* way, or is attended in His working with *unusual* effects, they should pause, and be *amazed*, and not merely so, but be *in doubt*, and say, *what meaneth this?* It was so on the day of Pentecost: "they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, what meaneth this?"

If the extraordinary working of the Holy Ghost was received with doubt and hesitation, even when accompanied with "signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts," can we expect that His extraordinary working should be received without a question now that all these concurrent testimonies

to its truth are wanting? No,—so high above our ways are His ways that even when God gives us what we ask for we scarcely can believe it is His gift, or that we really have the object that our hearts desired, it comes to us in a way so different from what we looked for. To nothing does this truth apply more strictly than to the Spirit. Is there one real believer whose experience does not compel him to confess that when the Spirit has been granted him in answer to his prayers, His work has been so different, yea, so opposed to what he had expected, that he has with difficulty been persuaded it was indeed the Spirit working in him? If, when the Spirit works in *themselves* in an *ordinary* way, the Lord's people are at first *in doubt* respecting it, can we be surprised if, when He works in *others* in an *extraordinary* way they should be in doubt concerning that, and say, "what meaneth this?" No verily, so truly unbelieving is even the believer's heart, that we ask too much of *him* when we bring a work that is *wonderful* before him, and bid him believe it is the "God that doeth wonders" that hath done it.

But whilst they were in doubt, how did Peter act in order to dispel their doubts? He brought them *the word of God*, and pointed out to them from that, that all extraordinary, and unlooked for as it was, the work before them was indeed the work of God, and that it corresponded most exactly with what the word of God declared the Spirit should effect. "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said . . . *this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, &c.*" We will now do as Peter did: we will bring our reader to the *word of God*, and *will show him from that* that the work which has been described, all extraordinary as it is, does correspond precisely with what the *word of God* informs us the *Holy Spirit* will effect. What is the first effect which the word of God would lead us to expect the *Holy Spirit* would produce? What was the first

effect produced by the first sermon that was ever preached under the power of the indwelling Holy Ghost? It was this, the hearers were "pricked in their heart," and said, "men and brethren, what shall we do?" Acts ii. 37. The first effect produced by the Spirit was evidently this, that it pricked the hearers to the heart with the conviction of their sin and danger, and imparted to them the heartfelt desire to escape. In the case of the jailor at Philippi the same conviction fastened on the heart apparently with still greater power, so as to cause considerable terror and distress: he "*sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down* before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*" Acts xvi. 29, 30. We see, then, from the word of God, that however the Spirit may act on some occasions, He does very frequently begin His work on the soul by piercing the sinner to the heart with the conviction of his sin and danger, so as sometimes to cause him extreme terror and distress. Of course the Spirit may work with different degrees of power in different persons; but if the effects produced by His working in an *ordinary* way are more gradual, it is reasonable to suppose that when He works in an *extraordinary* way the same effects will be produced in greater power, and therefore be brought out to view in characters more clear, and with features more distinct and unequivocal.

Thus it has been in the work at Charlinch. The people when awakened were pierced deeply to the heart, and the conviction of their sin fastened on them with such power as to cause them the greatest terror and distress; their sense of sin was bitter in the extreme, and their sorrow for it most unfeigned; their sight of the desert of sin and of the danger of their own souls was clear and vivid; and their desires to forsake sin, and live a godly life were not only felt and expressed, but really carried out into actual amendment of life. It is true the extent to

which these impressions prevailed in the awakened was *unusual*, and such as is not often seen; but this will appear altogether consistent when it is considered that the Spirit was now working in an *extraordinary* way, and that the effects were precisely similar to those that follow in a less degree when He works in an *ordinary* way. On those occasions when such mighty power attended the preaching of the word there was nothing more in the distress exhibited than what would strictly correspond with the expression a *broken heart*, and *contrite spirit*, nothing more than what we might reasonably expect if the Word of God should *really* prove "like as a *fire*," and "like a *hammer* that *breaketh the rock in pieces*." Jer. xxiii. 29. What extent of conviction, inward anguish, and alarm might not be wrought by the Word of God when it should come "*quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit?*" Heb. iv. 12. Could the Word of God reach any soul in this way without producing deep and powerful impressions of the most painful kind? Impossible! Surely Christians do not sufficiently consider the import of these terms, nor fully realize the great extent of power that is evidently implied in such expressions!

Neither, if we are willing to form our judgment from the *Word of God*, instead of measuring His power by what we are *accustomed* to behold of it, shall we question the character of the work before us on account of the *numbers* of those that have been the subjects of it. The Spirit will work *where*, and *when* and *how* He pleases, dividing to every man severally as He will. Sometimes he will take *one* of a *city*; at another He will take *two* of a *family* to bring them again to Zion, Jer. iii. 14; in one spot He will place a solitary soul like an ensign on a hill; in another He will make the wilderness to be *glad for them*, and cause the desert to rejoice and

blossom as the rose. We must not judge of what God will do at another time and place by what He does in our own time and place. Were the one man taken from a city to form a judgment of God's working by what He himself had seen of it he would, when he saw two of a family, and perhaps of many families, being brought in another city, begin to doubt whether *God* had done it. Notwithstanding so much is said in our day about keeping close to the word of God, we do very rarely form our judgment of divine things *simply from the word of God*: we take as much of the word as will support our own views, and leave the rest, and then we think we have formed our judgment from the word of God, though if any Scripture be brought to bear against our views we contrive to reason it away. No;—really to form our judgment from the word of God requires no little humbling of heart, no slight renunciation of reason, and no trifling submission of will; and it is therefore neither an easy, nor an ordinary thing. Moreover, our judgment is so liable to be influenced by our personal feelings, that one minister may even be disposed to doubt the character of the work performed through the instrumentality of another, because it seems more extensive and effectual than his own. But laying aside now all respect to what *he* has seen or known, and looking simply at the word of God, will the reader doubt whether this be the work of the Spirit because by one sermon *forty-five* persons were pricked to the heart, when he reads in that very word that by the first sermon preached under the Spirit 3000 were pricked to the heart? If it be alleged, as it often is, that such operations of the Spirit were *miraculous*, and confined to the Apostles' time, and therefore that we are not warranted in looking for the same in our days, it may be replied that every true conversion which has taken place since the days of the Apostles has been quite as

miraculous as those that took place under the Apostles themselves, at least, if by miraculous we are to understand the exertion of a power superior, or contrary to the laws of nature. It is true that conversion was in the days of the Apostles, sometimes accompanied with an *outward exhibition* of miraculous power; but then this was no part of the *conversion itself*, but only an adventitious circumstance attending it. Again, the assertion that such operations of the Spirit were to be limited to the Apostles' days is nothing more than an illustration of the truth just stated, that persons do not really form their judgment respecting divine things from the *Word of God*; for, if they did, they could not possibly make this assertion, seeing there is nothing in the Word of God to warrant it. Besides, the assertion has been proved repeatedly to be untrue *by facts*. The remarkable works that have been wrought at various intervals in different parts of the world since the Apostles' days refute it. We may instance, as they are most generally known, those that took place under Elliot and Brainerd among the Indians; those under President Edwards and Payson, in America; in our own country, those under Wesley, Whitfield, Rowland Hill and others; in Wales, under Rowlands of Llangeitho, Charles of Bala, &c.; and in Scotland, at various places under various ministers, not excluding those in our day under Mr. Burns at Kilsyth, Dundee and Aberdeen. These, with many other instances which might be mentioned, sufficiently confute it, and convince us that, whilst the Holy Spirit *generally* works in an *ordinary* way, He will *sometimes* work in an *extraordinary* way: they also prove to us that the Holy Spirit is, in His operations, like the wind which "*bloweth where it listeth*," to-day, and in this place blowing like a gentle breeze, to-morrow, and in another, like a "rushing mighty wind."

Let us now examine how far the character of

this work corresponds with what our Lord himself asserted the Spirit would perform. "When He is come," saith Christ, "He will reprove (or, convince) the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, *because they believe not on Me*: of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more: of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." John xvi. 8, 11. To convince the soul of the *sin of unbelief* is peculiarly the work of *the Spirit*. Natural conscience may convince of other sins; but it is in the power of the *Holy Ghost alone* to convince the sinner of the *sin of unbelief*. This is the *Gospel* conviction, and any, even the deepest conviction of sin, until it is accompanied by the conviction of the sin of unbelief, may be held as doubtful in respect to its being sound or not. The natural conscience and understanding may be so wrought upon as to cause considerable distress of soul, to excite much interest in the things of God, and to lead to no slight alteration in the life, without the subject of it being *savingly impressed*. Many such instances have happened here, and the parties, by their relapse into the world, have afforded melancholy examples of the deceitfulness of sin, and the desperate depravity of the human heart. This distinction between *legal* and *Gospel* conviction of sin is exceedingly important; much more so than the slight attention generally given to it seems to intimate. The want of this distinction being sufficiently observed will account for the circumstance of so many persons 'going back' who once were thought to be, and really were, something more than mere professors. They might have been deeply convinced of sin generally, deeply interested in the things of God, and much enlightened respecting them, yea, and much changed in conduct by them; and on these grounds they might have supposed themselves, and have been supposed by others, to be truly godly; and yet the Spirit might

never have performed on them so much as His first saving work; they might never have been *convinced of unbelief*. The seed may be sown in the heart, and even *spring up*; and the persons themselves, as well as others, may therefore think the work must be a sound one,—when, notwithstanding, the Spirit not being there, they have neither root nor depth of earth, and so endure *but for a time*. Hence, too, it is that in revivals, where such numbers are brought under conviction, so many that were at first as earnest and anxious as the rest do eventually fall away. For the same reason it seems very desirable that on such occasions ministers should not be too hasty in receiving as converted, or even as properly awakened, every one who is impressed and sincerely anxious; but should rather wait until the Spirit shall have manifested His own presence by convincing them of *unbelief*, and afterwards of *righteousness*. Indeed, when the Spirit is working in an extraordinary way, it is absolutely necessary to keep the distinction referred to in the forefront of our attention, and to use it practically in our dealing with the awakened, unless the vile is to be confounded with the precious, and the goats are to be folded together with the sheep.

The work of the Spirit, then, according to the word of Christ, is to convince the sinner of the sin of unbelief. The reader has only to look back on what he has already read respecting the character of their convictions, and he cannot but be struck with the remarkable fact that the *conviction of unbelief* formed one of the most prominent features in the experience of this people. They were soon, and deeply convinced of unbelief, and this sin seemed at length to swallow up all other sins: in fact, every one of them was, before he was actually converted, quite ‘shut up in unbelief,’ and so, prepared to receive salvation as a gift of *grace*. If there was *in any of them* an exception to this truth, it was—

and this is not a little remarkable—in the cases of those three the soundness of whose conversion we had reason afterwards to doubt.

The next work which our Lord informs us the Spirit will effect is, to “convince the world of righteousness.” To whatever extent conscience and morality may lead men in causing them to sorrow for their sins, and to reform their lives, there is none but the Holy Spirit that can possibly lead the sinner truly to renounce his own righteousness, and really to depend on the righteousness of Christ. It is the work of the Holy Ghost alone to give the sinner that discovery of *Christ's* righteousness, as accepted by the Father in the place of *his*, that will enable him, in the clear view of God's inflexible justice, and his own desperate wickedness, to possess a conscience free from fear, to draw near to God as a reconciled God, to confide in Him as a faithful friend, and to love and serve Him as a kind and gracious Father. This, however, is what *the Spirit* can, and does, do: He works in the sinner the assured conviction that God has actually accepted the obedience of Christ in place of his, so as to clear him from the curse of the broken law, and to justify his soul, having testified His satisfaction in His Son's obedience by raising Him from the dead and setting Him at His own right hand. Thus does the Spirit beget the before-despairing soul to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. If the reader will refer to what has been said respecting the character of their *conversions*, he will observe that this corresponded as exactly with what our Lord stated would be the work of the Spirit in converting, as the character of their *convictions* did with what He stated would be the work of the Spirit in convincing. He will notice that, after having stripped them of every hope in themselves, turned all their righteousness into filthy rags, and brought them into a state of *self-despair*, in a word, after having shut them up in

unbelief, the Spirit opened to them the door of faith, by directing them to the blood and righteousness of Christ, and enabling them to *depend on these* for pardon and salvation: he will notice, too, that by doing this they really did find rest unto their souls, their terror and distress departed, their dread of God's wrath gave way to a confidence in His mercy, and the painful spirit of legal bondage, which had kept their hearts as hard as iron, yielded to the softening influence of gospel liberty, whereby they were able, through the Spirit of adoption, to draw near to God, and call Him Father! In fact, their faith, when they did believe, was not a self-made persuasion, but the operation of the Spirit of God; it stood not in the 'wisdom of man,' but in the 'power of God;' so that though they were indeed justified by a faith without *works*, it was not by a faith without *fruits*, for it wrought by love: it was under the influence of that constraining love, that they first gave themselves up to the service of their God; and it is under the influence of the same constraining love that they have been ever since, and still are, living not unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again—even Jesus!

Lastly, let us look at what the word of God informs us will be the fruit brought forth by those in whom the Spirit dwells. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22, 23. Our Lord observes that a tree is known by its fruit. If trees of righteousness may be known by their bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, then, certainly this people have a claim to be considered "the planting of the Lord." The external conduct of all of them has been altered in this respect, that, whereas they were before lovers and followers of the world, they are now lovers and followers of Christ. In some of them the change has been so decided as to *call forth the astonishment* of their unconverted

friends, and even to induce them also to begin to seek the Lord. The improvement in their *outward* conduct, however, forms but a small part of the blessed change that has been wrought in them. It has been chiefly in the surprising influence exerted by the Spirit over their *dispositions, minds, and tempers*, that His presence in them has been manifested. Many a proud and hard spirit has been subdued and softened, and many a stout and stubborn heart been melted by the love of Jesus, and cast into the mould of humble-mindedness ; some who once were fierce, intractable, and of ungovernable passions, are now seen sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in their right mind. One man, for instance, who is now a sincere disciple of the Lord, was, not very many months ago, taken before the magistrate and fined for being drunk on the Sabbath day, and disturbing the minister whilst preaching, the very minister under whom he has now been some months sitting a worshipper of God in spirit and in truth. In several cases, children who have been bred up in sin, and who have been accustomed all their lives to tell lies by habit, and to curse and swear as though it were a matter of indifference, and who still hear their parents, brothers, and sisters continually doing it, are now never known to tell a lie, or to utter an oath, even though their own brothers do all they can to provoke them to it. Boys who have for years been accustomed to assemble in the evening, after work, to encourage each other in wickedness and folly, now meet together to read the word of God and pray. Indeed, so astonishing has been the change produced on some of them that, their masters, though unconverted, could not help expressing their surprise and satisfaction at it ; whilst the unconverted parents of others, have been induced by the blessed change they have beheld in their own children, to come to the minister and mention their desire to seek the *same themselves*. The mother of the two boys who

were turned out of the school for misconduct, and who afterwards used to come to church and laugh in the minister's face, came to him with tears in her eyes, and was quite overcome by her feelings, whilst she confessed how often her heart had been made to ache, by the reckless conduct and bad behaviour of her boys, and whilst she offered her grateful acknowledgements for their having been rescued from the paths of misery and vice, and brought to sober habits, serious minds, and a humble, holy walk with God. These dear boys are indeed monuments no less of God's mighty power than of His free and sovereign grace. The writer cannot forbear mentioning the pleasure he experienced one day, when a woman, who was in real concern about her soul, told him that, being some time before in trouble on account of worldly cares, her little girl,—not ten years old, came up to her and said, encouragingly, 'O, mother, don't trouble about the world; if you trouble about the world, you will never be able to come to Jesus; don't care about the world any more, mother, but give up all your heart to seek after Jesus!'

Nor may we omit to mention the real delight the children have in communion with God: they are in truth a praying people: all of them are found at the throne of grace three or four times a-day; nor do they suffer their occupations in the fields to hinder this, but retire into a barn, behind a hedge, or even into a ditch, to carry on their intercourse with heaven. On Sunday, at their own request, and by the minister's permission, they meet twice in the day for united prayer, the boys being in one room, and the girls in another. A person who happened to over-hear them, was struck with the humble yet filial confidence with which they appeared to draw near to God, as well as with the simplicity and unction with which they poured out their hearts in earnest supplication for themselves and others. The reader *will recollect* that all these children, without one

exception, were, twelve months ago, in total unconcern about their souls, and as heedless and careless about eternity and the things of God as wild asses' colts; many of them were habitual sabbath-breakers; several were liars, swearers, and blasphemers; some were rebellious, and disobedient to their parents; and others open mockers of God's word and worship; all were "far off," "having no hope," and "without God in the world." May we not say with truth, "instead of the *thorn* has come up the *fir tree*, and instead of the *brier* has come up the *myrtle tree*; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, and for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off?" Isa. lv. 13. Surely, it were better for themselves, and more agreeable to God, that the Lord's people, instead of regarding with jealousy and cold suspicion these displays of grace and mercy, should rejoice together with the angels over these repenting sinners, and be cheered to think that there is yet a God in Israel that heareth prayer, whose hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear! Surely at these renewed manifestations of God's power, faithfulness, and love, the mountains and the hills may well break forth before them into singing, and all the trees of the field may clap their hands. Isa. lv. 12.

There is yet one more particular in which the character of this work corresponds with Scripture;—the people love one another. Jesus said, "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii. 35. This people are known by the world around them as the disciples of Christ both on account of their separation from others, and their union among themselves. They not only address each other as 'brother,' and 'sister,'—though they do this—but they at least *desire* to feel that real affection for each other which the words imply: certainly, their fervent prayers for one another, and for the prevalence of unity and love

among themselves, impress the hearer with the conviction that they do "*endeavour* to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. iv. 3. Indeed, considering the difficulty that is found in making men to be of one mind even in a *house*, we have received it as a token of God's peculiar favour that such a body of people, between 90 and 100 in number, have been kept together in the unity and love that these have. The world, their friends and relations, and individuals of other denominations, have striven hard to separate them, and Satan has been strenuous in his endeavours to sow divisions among them; but God has graciously frustrated all these attempts, and the people, after each, have become more united than they were before. They are like "a city that is set on a hill;" not like straggling houses that stand apart from one another at various distances; but like houses *united*, even like "*Jerusalem* which was builded as a city that is *compact together*." Psa. cxxii. 3.

This unity among the people may be attributed in no slight degree to their *submission to their minister*. Instead of every one doing what was right in his own eyes, they looked to the minister as the messenger of the Lord of hosts, and sought the law at his mouth, Malachi ii. 7: thus by obeying him that had the rule over them, and submitting themselves to him, Heb. xiii. 17, there have been no divisions among them, and they are perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1 Cor. i. 10. Not, however, that their submission was that of the spirit of bondage, but rather of love, and of a sound mind; it was not merely to *the man* they submitted, but to *God in Him*: they knew and felt that *through him* God had blessed them, and called them out of darkness into light, and therefore they esteemed him very highly in love for his work's sake. 1 Thess. v. 13. Indeed, when the *time came for them to part with him*, many of them,

boys and men, no less than girls and women, seemed as if their hearts were rent in twain with sorrow; nor would they suffer him to quit them without presenting him unitedly with a token of their love. At the close of the lecture in which their minister took leave of them, a little girl ten years of age came quietly up to him, and said, "here is a penny for you;" at the same time she put into his hand two farthings and a half-penny.

Having completed our examination of the character of this work as tried by Scripture, we think the candid reader will conclude with us that it is fairly entitled to be considered *the work of the Spirit*. Some persons have suggested whether it might not be mere *excitement of feeling*. It is true persons may be much excited by religious feelings, and go far, and do many things, under the influence of such feelings without being savingly impressed. Allusion has been made to such more than once in this account; and we have mentioned the care that was taken not to confound them with those who were the subjects of the saving work of the Spirit: we pointed out, too, the distinction that existed between them, viz., in *the latter being convinced by the Spirit, first of unbelief, and afterwards of righteousness*. No;—in these latter it has not been mere excitement of feeling; if it had, it could not possibly have endured the trial it has undergone. One who has not been a witness of it, can scarcely conceive what a "fight of afflictions" this people have passed through from the humbling work of the Spirit within, the bitter persecutions of the world without, and the fearful and harassing temptations of Satan,—enough, truly, during the space of from two to six months that they endured it, to have cooled their excitement even if it had been most intense. Moreover, when they heard the word, they did not immediately receive it "with gladness," nor did the seed "forthwith spring up," neither did they "when the sun was up

'become' scorched and wither away." So far from receiving the word with *gladness*,—before they were allowed to "reap in joy," they were compelled to sow for many a month in bitter tears; ere the seed sprung up and bore the blessed fruits of love, joy, peace, &c., it struck down and took root in real contrition, brokenness of heart, and self-abasement: thus it obtained some "depth of earth," so that when the sun was up,—“when tribulation and persecution arose because of the word,”—they were not offended. In truth, this people, young and old, have endured a 'fiery trial,' and the fruit they now bear has indeed been brought forth *with patience*. Nor is there in the demeanour of the people any appearance of excitement, neither have there been any displays of extravagance or enthusiasm among them: on the contrary, there is for the most part a seriousness of mind and quietness of spirit about them, the children no less than the adults, which savours much less of excitement than subduedness.

It has also been suggested that the extraordinary effect produced upon the children the day the revival began in the school might have been the "natural effect of the Word." We doubt whether there be many believing persons who, had they been present on that occasion, would be bold enough to hazard this remark: the whole thing had in it that which marked it in a peculiar way as being above the power of nature. Besides, had it been nothing beyond the natural power of the Word, it would ere long have worn away when it was *tried*, instead of enduring the test of such tremendous opposition as it has. Moreover, several of these children, as well as of the adults, were so humbled in heart as to be reduced to a state of self-despair, and to be brought to *submit to God's sovereignty* before they received faith to believe in Christ. Rom. ix. 15—24. Will any one acquainted with experimental truth feel disposed to ascribe *this to the natural effect* of the Word? Had it been

merely something peculiar or alarming in the *voice or manner of the preacher*, then the *smaller children* would have been the most likely to be overcome by it, and the *girls* would have been more affected by it than the *boys* : but the case was exactly the reverse ; those that were most deeply affected were the *bigger boys*, from twelve years old to twenty, whose age, habits of life, and rustic occupations, were precisely of a kind to make their feelings less susceptible ; and there were many more *boys* awakened in the school than *girls*. Let it be remembered, too,—what has been mentioned before,—that these same children, the greater number of them, had been taught by the same minister, warned, exhorted, and preached to in Church, and at school, for more than *twelve months*, and never did he see *one* of them shed a tear, or even seem seriously affected by it ; and yet, at length, in one *half hour*, the souls of more than *forty* children were bowed down before God as the soul of *one* child, and their hearts moved by the Spirit of the Lord as the trees of the wood are moved by the wind. Here were the *same minister*, the *same truths*, the *same place*, and the *same people* : where then, was the difference ? doubtless in the *mighty power of God*, and the *effectual presence of his Holy Spirit*. If, however, the reader be still disposed to doubt whether it might not have been the natural effect of the Word, let him bring together twenty careless, worldly-minded boys, whom he may find in the lanes playing at marbles on the Sabbath-day, from twelve to twenty years of age, just rising into the pride of independence, and the vain glory of self-consequence, and let him speak to them in any way he will respecting God and their own souls ; he will then learn by experience what is the *natural effect* of the Word upon such people ; it is not at all unlikely that they will laugh in his face, as they often have done in the writer's.

Some other objections have been made to this work which may be briefly noticed. It has been objected that, "the kingdom of God cometh not *with observation*;" and that it is not "lo here," nor "lo there." It is difficult to discover in what way these texts bear upon the subject: if it be implied from them that the work of the Spirit is not accompanied by any *external manifestations*,—and this is the only point of view in which we suppose they can apply,—the whole tenor of Scripture, and the experience of all true believers contradict it. When the wind bloweth, we cannot, it is true, tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, but, then, we do *hear the sound thereof*; and not only so, but we also *see the effects of it*, and, when it bloweth powerfully, these are sometimes very striking: "so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John iii. 6. The kingdom of God, in this sense, *does* come with observation. A little reflection, however, will convince the reader that it is a misapplication of the passage altogether. It has even been adduced as a proof that this is not the work of the Spirit that, whereas most godly ministers catch but a *few* fish in *their* Gospel net,—one here, and another there,—here they have been caught *by the score together*. It is painful to have to answer such objections. May not the Lord of all do what He likes with each? and does He not employ His ministers in different ways, and to accomplish different works? We read not of any conversions wrought through Andrew or James, Bartholomew or Thomas; but we are told of 3000 that were awakened through *Peter*, and of the many Churches that were planted by *Paul*. May there not even be a great difference in the success of the same minister at different times? Did not Simon toil *all night* and take *nothing*; and yet, when at the word of the Lord he let down his net he enclosed so *great a multitude of fishes* that the net brake, *and he was astonished*, and all they that were with

him, at the draught of fishes which they had taken. Luke v. 5—9. Does not the objection itself involve a denial of the truth that “all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit, *dividing to every man severally as He will.* 1 Cor. xii. 11. Who then is Paul? and who is Apollos? but ministers by whom those that are converted have believed, *even as the Lord gave to every man.* Ch. iii. 5. If Paul plant, and Apollos water, it is *God* that giveth the increase; and when God does give to any minister either to plant or water more abundantly than others, He will take care so to humble and empty that minister, as to make him deeply realize in his own soul, that neither he that planteth is *anything*, neither he that watereth, but that *God* that giveth the increase is *all in all.* Ver. 7. Wherefore, let no man glory in men, but let all understand that “He that planteth, and he that watereth are *one*,” and let each in all fidelity follow his own calling; for “Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.” Ver. 8.

We would not have the reader suppose from what has been said that we wish to represent this people as being without fault; far from it! It became needful whilst exhibiting the real character of the work as tried by Scripture, to enter with some minuteness into the details of their experience and walk with God; in doing so, it has been our endeavour to keep close to the truth, and if, in consequence of this, their religion has appeared in a favourable light, it is now to be observed that there are some to whom this general approval does not apply. About five or six among them have afforded us some trouble, and by their occasional inconsistencies have exposed themselves to merited rebuke; whilst, by their frequent repetition of them, one or two of these have sometimes caused us even to look at their conversion with some suspicion. We have felt the misconduct of these the more because the world has been ever

on the watch for our halting, and our enemies would rejoice to magnify the occasional inconsistencies of a few into habitual inconsistency in all. Neither do we desire to represent this people as having made any great attainments in the divine life. We know they have not. With some exceptions they are but babes in Christ; nor do we wish them to be thought otherwise. Our object in speaking of them as we have done has been merely to make it appear they are not *bastards*, but genuine children, *sons*; and to establish the claim of the work to be considered *the work of the Spirit*: at the same time we feel at liberty to express our conviction that in the greater number of them, the work of grace is a peculiarly sound one, and that, with the exceptions just noticed, they are all in a healthy and thriving condition. Should it happen, however,—though we trust it will not,—that some of this people do eventually disappoint our expectations, it would by no means invalidate the claim of the work generally to be considered *the work of the Holy Ghost*. Were there not “foolish Galatians” in the Church of Galatia; and those of whom the Apostle himself “stood in doubt?” Gal. iii. 1; iv. 20. Did there not even in the Church of Ephesus arise “men from among themselves, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.” Acts xx. 30. Were there not in the Church at Thessalonica some that “walked among them disorderly, working not at all, but were busybodies.” 2 Thess. iii. 11. And in the Corinthian Church was there not “utterly a fault among them;” and did they not “go to law one with another?” and were there not those who “did wrong, and defrauded, and that their own brethren.” 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8. What shall we say to these things? These were Churches planted by an Apostle, even the Apostle Paul, and one of them was for the space of three years watched over by him personally. What shall we say then? *May we not say this?* that though there be a few

tares found in a field of wheat, the wheat *itself* is not less real or valuable: and must we not also conclude that until "the end of the world" shall come, the very best work of the Spirit will be more or less defiled with the filth of the flesh, though it will not on that account lose its claim to be considered *the work of the Spirit?*

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

ONE object which the writer has had in view in publishing this account, and which he thinks it is calculated under the Divine blessing to effect, is to stir up the hearts of the Lord's people, and especially of His *ministers*; to *expect great things* from God. He has lately been much impressed with the conviction that the children of God do exceedingly dishonour their Father by expecting such *little things* from Him. Our God is a *great* God, a God of *great grace, great mercy, and great power*; yea, His grace is boundless, His mercy infinite, and His power almighty: surely from so great a God His people ought to expect no other than *great things*. Moreover, it is not so much in His possessing, as in His *manifesting* His grace, mercy, and power that God is glorified; and the *greater* the grace, the mercy, and the power that are manifested, the *brighter* is the glory that accrues to Him: now in this consideration we have a powerful incentive and encouragement to *expect great things* from God, seeing that He is *greatly glorified* in giving them.

With respect to godly ministers, especially the writer is fully satisfied that one, if not the chief, reason, why they see so little fruit of their labour is because they *expect so little*; whilst the same thing accounts for their being *contented* with so little. Did they *really* believe and *expect* that God would do *great things* for them, they would not, nay, they

could not rest *satisfied* without them ; and this, too, would stir them up to increasing zeal and unremitting prayer until they actually had them ; and if, notwithstanding this, they did not get them, this would cause them to suspect it must be *something in themselves* that prevented their obtaining them, and would lead them diligently to try themselves, and earnestly to pray that God would search them deeply, and discover what there was in their life, experience, or ministry, that was acting as an impediment to God's being glorified in them as He might be ; nor, if they were upright in heart, would they be contented until this had been discovered and removed.

The account of the work of grace at Charlinch is calculated to stir up a spirit of expectation among ministers, and to lead them not only to desire, but to *look for* great things from God. It is here made manifest that the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy that it cannot hear ; but that what we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us of the noble works which God did in their days, and in the old time before them, *we* may behold with *our* eyes, and see done in *our* days also. God is the same great God now that He was then ; there is the same freeness in His grace, the same richness in His mercy, and the same power in His Spirit now that there ever have been ; and He is only waiting for His people to expect and pray for it that He may make it known to them. It is not their weakness, it is not their unworthiness that hinders Him : it is *their unbelief* : it is *this* that dams up the current of God's grace, blights the buddings of His mercy, withers the sinews of His outstretched arm, and impedes the mighty operation of His Holy Spirit. He cannot do many mighty works among them *because of their unbelief* ! O that men—and especially that *ministers*—would cast away their evil heart of unbelief, and, *limiting* no more the Holy One of Israel, would give

God credit for the liberal soul, the noble heart, and open hand He really has! O, that, hearkening to His command, and expecting from so great a God great things, they would pray for them, *believing that they have them*; then would they prove Him therewith whether He would not open on them the windows of heaven, and pour them out a blessing on their ministry so great that they should scarcely have room enough to receive it.

Whilst it is generally admitted that this blessing can be effected only by the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost, it is not so generally discerned that notwithstanding so much is said in these days—and properly said, too—about praying for the Spirit, there is in reality very little *looking to the Spirit* for the performance of the work even by those that are praying for Him. The *dependence* is *really* upon means, and duties, and multiplied religious machinery; and even godly ministers are in truth looking more to *these things* for the effecting of the work than to the Holy Ghost Himself; which is one reason why so little work is done. No one denies for an instant that means are to be used, and diligently, too; but the prevailing error of the Lord's people in this day seems to be that they are multiplying means, and looking to *them* instead of to the *Holy Ghost*; though from the natural deceitfulness of the heart they do not perceive it.

The forbearance of the reader is entreated whilst the writer proceeds to point out three causes that may account for the Holy Ghost not being poured out in any measure corresponding to the prayers that have been offered for Him. First: many, if not most, of those who are praying that He may come would scarcely *recognize or acknowledge Him* if He should come. Let not this remark be thought uncharitable: was not this very kind of incredulity exhibited in the first Christians? When Peter was in prison, was not prayer made for him without ceasing by the church?

and yet, when God, in answer to their prayers, released him, and Peter himself came and knocked at the door of the house where they were praying, did they not actually refuse to believe that it was he. Acts xii. 4—16. Truly, the extent to which unbelief prevails even in the believing heart is little suspected by the believer himself, until some such circumstance as this doth bring it out to view. Nor should we omit to notice that the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost would be attended with accompaniments so little in accordance with what most of those who are praying for His coming expect would be produced by it, that if He did come they would find it difficult to recognize the presence of the very thing they had been praying for.

Secondly: but few of those who are praying for His coming would *be able to bear Him* if he should come. The coming of the Holy Ghost in power is attended with such heart-searching and soul-trying consequences, that there be few indeed who may abide the day of His coming, and who may stand when he appeareth; for when He does come, He is like a *refiner's fire*, and like fuller's soap, Mal. iii. 2. The baptism of John unto repentance is like *water*; it cleanseth *outwardly*, and *many* can bear it: but the baptism of Christ with the Holy Ghost unto conversion is like *fire*; it searcheth *inwardly*, and but *few* can bear it, Mat. iii. 11. Many can bear the outward cleansing from vice, immorality, and religious carelessness to virtue, decency, and a diligent attendance upon means of grace. Many can bear the external piety that consists in good congregations, flourishing schools, Evangelical views, a gospel ministry, and the various kinds of religious societies, prayer meetings, and pious institutions now so prevalent. The writer entreats he may not be misunderstood: he assures the reader seriously that *he is not speaking against* these things, neither is he *now treating* them lightly or ironically: no, he is

merely placing them in their proper light: they are parts of that baptism of *water* which *many* can bear. But that inward anointing of the Holy Ghost that searcheth the hearts, and trieth the very reigns of men; that, like a refiner's fire, doth bring to light the hidden iniquity of the heart itself, and utterly destroy as dross the strength of nature, the life of self, and the goodliness of the flesh in all its varied forms of religious satisfaction and complacency; that mighty power, which, going far beyond evangelical views and a gospel ministry in the letter, doth make the mouth of the minister like a *polished shaft* in the hand of the Almighty, the truths he utters—*living truths*; and the word he speaks, what the word of God,' that 'sword of the Spirit' ought to be, and what it really will be when the Spirit wields it, *heavy as a hammer, searching as fire, and sharper than a two-edged sword*; that power which like a 'spirit of *judgment* shall bring the well esteemed in the religious world, both wise and foolish virgins, to the touchstone of *reality*, and try what *truth they have in their hearts* in addition to the knowledge they have in their heads, the doctrines they have on their lips, and the works they have in their hands; and which, like a 'spirit of *burning*,' shall search out the secret pride of self-dependence, and the subtle workings of a self-righteous spirit that are really at the root of a great part of the religion of the present day, and shall utterly destroy and wash away this filth from the *daughters of Zion*, and purge away this blood of *Jerusalem* from the midst thereof; in a word, that power whose chief work it is to *pull down self*, and *set up Christ*; this baptism of *living fire*, who can bear it? Yet *this* is what the Holy Ghost will be when He shall come, Isa. xlix. 2. Jerem. xxiii. 29. Heb. iv. 12. Isa. iv. 4.

Thirdly: He would find but few vessels *fitted to receive Him*. God, the Holy Ghost is pleased, 'in effecting the salvation of sinners, to work in and by

living men. These are the vessels He makes use of to convey the waters of eternal life to dying souls: these are the pens that He employs to write His law upon the fleshy tables of the human heart. But it is not every vessel that is calculated to convey these waters. The vessel must be *fitted* for the Master's use ere he can use it; and truly it is no superficial cleansing, no slight purifying that is required to make the vessel meet for such a service. When the Holy Ghost really does come in power, He acts so independently of the restraint of all human forms, ceremonies, and systems, rises so far above the ordinary and stated means of grace, and requires, in order to effect His object, such a singleness of eye, and simplicity of purpose in the instrument He uses, that unless the vessel has been previously fitted for the service, the minister is likely to become alarmed at consequences, fear following faithfully the Spirit where He leads, and even attempt to escape from the position where He finds himself. Truly, the minister who is looking for the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost should 'count the cost.' Moreover, the coming of the Holy Ghost in power invariably brings *persecution* with it, 2 Tim. iii. 12; it excites the hatred of the world, and the opposition of the flesh; it finds out professors, and this too often turns them into foes, Zeph. i. 12; it produces variance in families, setting brothers against sisters, and sisters against brothers, parents against children, and children against parents, and makes a man's foes to be they of his own household, Matt. x. 34—36. It stirs up satan too; satan can bear patiently with evangelical truths, a gospel ministry, and all the other means of grace, provided *the Spirit of life be not in them*, for then they make no inroad on his kingdom: but when the Holy Ghost doth work, satan will work too, and soon set in motion all the machinery he can to stop Him. Now the persecution thus entailed is not trifling; and as it is not the smallest portion of it that is likely

to fall upon the instrument, it is evident that unless He has been *fitted* for the service He will scarcely be able to endure it.

To all this may be added also, that when the Spirit works with extraordinary power, it must of necessity lead him by whom He works, to act in some respects in an extraordinary way, so that even godly men and ministers may be induced to look on Him and his doings with suspicion and mistrust. Now, all these things coming on a minister at once, whilst at the same time perhaps those from whom he expected help, stand aloof instead of coming to assist him, he will be likely, unless he has been fitted for the work, to confer with flesh and blood, and think the path too narrow, and his position too painful, and then, listening to the suggestions of worldly prudence and carnal wisdom, (which, misapplying Scripture as they always do, will remind him that the wisdom of the serpent must be joined with the meekness of the dove,) to *give way* before the flood of opposition with which the enemy is coming in. In order that a minister may be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, as an instrument for the Holy Ghost to work by, he must be one who is ready to present as a living sacrifice to God, his health and interests, his name and prospects, his friends and family, his domestic comfort, yea, and his own life, and to count them not dear unto himself; then indeed *none* of these things will *move him*, Acts xx. 24; he must be one who is willing to be both persecuted and hated, despised and misunderstood, and who will submit to be made as the filth of the earth, and the 'offscouring of all things' unto this day; of *all* things, not merely of the wicked and profane, not merely of the world and some opposing party; but of *all things*; yea, even of *the Church itself*.

Notwithstanding, then, that ministers and their people do well to persevere in praying for the out-

pouring of the Holy Ghost, yet till they be able to *recognize* and *bear* Him when He does come, and until there be vessels *fitted to receive him*, the Holy Ghost will *not* come. Howbeit, God is perhaps at this very time preparing vessels to receive Him, and fitting instruments for Him to work by.

Whilst the writer sets before the minister who is praying for, and anxiously desiring the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost, the necessity of 'counting the cost' connected with His coming, he would at the same time earnestly entreat him not to shrink from paying it. O no! the blessedness of being truly and entirely given up to God, and of being *unreservedly* devoted, body, soul, and spirit, to His service is such that those who really know it by experience can testify that all the comfort, ease, and satisfaction involved in the possession of approving friends and relatives, fair prospects, a respectable position among men, and the good opinion of the Christian world are good for nothing when compared with this. Yea, they are bold in their God to say, for they have found it so, that no man shall leave house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for Christ's sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive a *hundred fold*, now *in this time*, houses and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life; that is, he who for the sake of Christ and the gospel shall suffer the loss of any, or all of these sources of comfort shall find, even *in this life*, a *hundred times as much blessedness in the enjoyment of Christ and his service* as he did in the possession of the objects that he loses for his sake, Mark x. 29, 30. Those who have not tried the experiment, and suffered the loss of all things for Christ, cannot conceive, nor will they *really* believe, what a solid peace, abiding rest, and satisfying blessedness *they* find in Christ who *have* done so. *They are rejoiced* to add their testimony respecting the

sufficiency of Christ to that of holy Paul, and to declare, with him, that what things were gain (most dear) to them, they now count loss, (worth nothing) for Christ; yea—doubtless, it is so certain as to be beyond a question—that they do count *all things* but loss for *the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord*, for whom they *have suffered the loss of all things*, and do *count them but dung*, Phil. iii. 7, 8. O, to be unreservedly and unqualifiedly surrendered up to God and His service, this is indeed a blessedness so great as to be in truth *its own reward*. And then the unspeakable privilege of winning souls to Christ, of preparing jewels to adorn his diadem, and crowns to grace his head! The blessedness of being employed in turning sinners from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan unto God, in plucking brands from the eternal burning, and fitting them for monuments of grace, and everlasting glory! what an honourable office to people heaven with inhabitants, and to subserve in the highest possible degree the glory of the ever-blessed God! an office in itself so high and holy that the man who is engaged in it, is dispised of men on earth, and if possible, envied by angels in heaven. “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever, Dan. xii. 3.

Should any minister feel his soul kindle with a holy desire to be employed in this heavenly service, let him not be discouraged by any difficulties whatever. The writer of this tract has known by experience the united force of every kind of opposition; and he has known, too, the mighty power of that God in whose sight the inhabitants of the earth are as *grasshoppers*. He feels great confidence in encouraging any minister who is entering on such a work not to turn back in the day of battle; but to give himself up wholly to God who will assuredly stand by him and strengthen him, will carry him through every dif-

ficulty, and make him more than conqueror over every foe. Let him beware chiefly of listening to the suggestions of *worldly prudence* and *carnal policy*, either in himself or others, for they will be sure to recommend him to avoid the cross, under the appearance of combining the 'wisdom of the serpent' with the 'harmlessness of the dove.' Perhaps he may be called to *stand alone*; yet let him not be dismayed or falter; for *his God* is with him. Let him pray especially for that *single eye*, and *upright heart*, and *overcoming faith* that will enable him to *disregard self*, and *leave consequences to the Lord*. God will bear witness to His own work, and honour His own grace; for "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, to *show himself strong* in the behalf of them *whose heart is perfect toward Him*."

The writer may be allowed to notice briefly some of the *means* that have been found most effectual in obtaining the desired end. In front of all must be placed *prayer*, that mighty power which moves the hand that moves the world. *Much* prayer, yea, *very much* prayer, O *how much* prayer is called for in a work of this kind. Truly the minister should live in an element of prayer. Prayer should be the *great business* of every day, and take precedence of every other duty. As general statements lose much of their power and application the writer would here observe, merely for the sake of being more explicit, that, *at the very least*, four hours a day should be passed in private prayer; six hours is not very much: he has in his mind at this moment a dear brother who passes *ten* hours daily in prayer; and God is bearing witness to it in his ministry. It may appear to the minister that he has so many, and such important duties to attend to besides prayer, that it would not be possible, or even desirable, to neglect these in order to give *so much* time to the other. If however, *he will take* the testimony of those that have had

experience in this matter, he may be assured that prayer is so more than paramountly important, that there is no duty whatever from which he may not with profit take time, to give that time to prayer; nor will the duty really suffer any loss by this, for whilst a minister is praying, he is performing all duties in one. The writer is now so fully established in this truth, that he recalls to mind with something like astonishment the hesitation he at first felt in following the leading of God when He called him away at Charlinch from other duties, one after another, to devote the time that had been spent in these to prayer, until at length he literally for a season, did little else all day than pray. It is contrary to *reason* to pray *so much*: the minister who takes time from other duties to give the more to prayer is not *observed* by himself and others to be *doing much*; and, in these days of doing, this is trying. The truth is, however, he is doing a *great deal*, for he is doing that which alone makes other doings truly effectual; and he is, moreover, moving the hand and heart of Him, who after all, is He who really *does the whole*. If the reader finds himself inwardly drawn to take time from other duties that he may give the more to prayer, he is entreated to follow it without fear or hesitation.

In addition to private prayer, *united* prayer is to be noticed. If there be any divine blessing which calls more decidedly for united prayer than another, it is that of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. It is particularly noticed in Scripture that when the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost, the disciples were "all with one accord in one place." Besides general prayer meetings open to all, it will prove a peculiar help to the minister, if he can get those in whom he has full confidence as converted, or any number of them, to meet together once or twice on the sabbath, and two or three times statedly in the week, to plead for the outpouring of the

Spirit. The writer remembers with gratitude and affection the dear people who used thus to meet and pray for himself at Charlinch; nor can he readily forget the strength and comfort it afforded him. If the parties have their *hearts* engaged they will not mind the time and inconvenience. The writer recollects that some of his own dear people who regularly attended such meetings would, after working all the day, walk two or three miles to be present at them; and this they did throughout the winter, and often in such weather as almost any one would think sufficient to deter them. It has been found useful, in order to excite their interest, and to stir up a spirit of prayer among them, to read to those who thus unite in prayer, some published accounts of revivals, as, for instance, of those by dear Mr. Burns in Scotland, and also to enlarge on the glory given to Jesus in the salvation of lost souls. These means are calculated to draw out their desires, and to call forth their expectations, both of which are quite essential in order to fervent, persevering and effectual prayer. As respects the mode of conducting the prayer meetings, the more fully the mind of the minister is in accordance with the mind of God, the better: one would suppose that those should pray who have grace to pray, and whose hearts the Holy Ghost disposes to, without any being *obliged* to do so. The minister who is in earnest will soon feel his wants, and this will teach him what to pray for. Most ministers thus engaged, have felt the need of praying for a deep, and *heart-moving* sense of the awful state and dreadful misery of those to whom they preach, a clear and *realizing* view of the certain destruction of every sinner who dies out of Christ, also a clear discovery of the great glory that accrues to Christ in the salvation of sinners, and especially, an earnest *desire* and real *expectation* that God actually will give them what they ask, an abundance of the *Spirit*, and a great many souls for their hire. The

minister should not forget to pray that God will begin with *him*, for it is most certain that the Lord must do a mighty work *in* a minister before He can do a mighty work *by* him. He will do well, also, to pray for *praying faith*.

With regard to the *preaching*: for converting souls to God the preaching cannot possibly be too *plain* and *simple*. In a work of this kind the grand object is not to build up the understanding with doctrinal truth, but to rouse the conscience, prick the heart, strip the sinner of every self-righteous hope, and bring him, in a deep sense of his complete ruin, to the cross of Christ for pardon and salvation. Hence the ministry of those who have been honoured by the Lord in this work has invariably been characterized by powerful appeals to the conscience, and close and searching application to the heart; by plainly and forcibly setting forth the complete ruin of man, the impossibility of his doing anything to deliver himself, and the certainty of his everlasting destruction, unless he really ceases from his own works, and, by faith, embraces the salvation that there is in Christ; and, especially, by a peculiarly clear exhibition of the free, full, and perfect salvation which becomes the sinner's the very instant he believes on Jesus. The preacher need not fear dwelling on these points, over and over again; for if there be *life* in his word the frequent repetition of these truths will be neither tedious nor unprofitable, whilst they are sure to *meet the condition of the people*. When the work of *conversion* begins, it has been found very desirable to have a *separate teaching* for those that are converted. The teaching suited to the state of the unconverted being chiefly of a pulling down kind, and that suited to the state of the converted rather building up, what is required for the former is not altogether food convenient for the latter. Certainly the best *preparation* for preaching is *much praying*. Nor

should we omit to mention *frequent fasting* as a very efficient help to both praying and preaching. The writer cannot help noticing the assistance he derived from it; nor can he forbear expressing his regret that this valuable means of grace is now so much neglected by the people of the Lord. *Family fasts* were evidently much blessed by God at Charlinch, and so was the fasting unitedly of those who met together in the evening for prayer.

Whilst the minister is encouraged to use diligently all the means whereby the gift of the Holy Ghost may be obtained, and the salvation of his people secured, he is earnestly and affectionately entreated by the writer *not to rest in these*, so as to be *satisfied with the means without the end they are intended to procure*. The attention of the reader is particularly requested to this point, because to multiply means, and be *satisfied with these without the end for which they should be used*, seems to be one of the prevailing errors of the Christian world in these days; whilst the allowed opinion that we *ought* to be satisfied with using the means without obtaining the end is an equally prevailing delusion. There are no delusions so delusive, because so little suspected as delusions, as those that seem to have the warrant of the word of God. There are many such; and this is one. The language we have been accustomed to adopt is this, we must use the means, and leave the event to God, we can do no more than employ the means: this is our duty, and, having done this, we must leave the rest to Him who is the disposer of all things. Such language sounds well, for it seems to be an acknowledgment of our own nothingness, and to savour of submission to God's sovereignty: but it is only sound; it has not really any substance in it, for though there is truth stamped on *the face* of it, there is falsehood at *the root* of it. To talk of submission to God's sovereignty is one thing; but *really to submit* to it is another, and quite a different

thing. Really to submit to God's sovereign disposal, does always necessarily involve the deep renunciation of our own will in the matter concerned; and such a renunciation of the will can never be effected, without a soul being brought through very severe and trying exercises of an inward and most humbling nature. Therefore, if, whilst we are quietly satisfied in using the means without obtaining the end, and this costs us no such painful inward exercises and deep humbling as that alluded to, we think that we are leaving the affair to God's disposal, we deceive ourselves, and the truth (in this matter) is not in us. No; really to give up anything to God, implies that *the will*, which is emphatically *the heart*, has been *set on that thing*; and if *the heart* has indeed been *set* on the salvation of sinners, as the end to be answered by the means we use, we cannot possibly give up that end, without, as was before observed, the heart being severely exercised and deeply pained by the renunciation of the will involved in it. When therefore we can be quietly content to use the means for saving souls without seeing them saved thereby, it is because there is no renunciation of the will, that is, no real giving up to God in the affair: the fact is, the will, that is, *the heart* had never really been set upon this end: if it had, it could not possibly give up such an end without being *broken* by the sacrifice. When we can thus be satisfied to use the means without obtaining the end, and speak of it as though we were submitting to the Lord's disposal, we use a truth to hide a falsehood, exactly in the same way that those formalists in religion do who continue in forms and duties without going beyond them, though they know they will not save them, and who, when they are warned of their danger, and earnestly entreated to seek the Lord with all the heart, reply by telling us they know they must repent and believe, but that they cannot do either the one or the other of themselves, and that they must wait till God gives

them grace to do so. Now, this is a truth absolutely considered, yet most of us can see that they are using it as a falsehood to cover and excuse a secret insincerity of heart. We can readily perceive that if their *hearts* were really set upon salvation they could not rest *satisfied* without it. Their contentedness is the result not of *heart submission* to God, but, in reality, of *heart indifference to the salvation of their own souls*.

Exactly so it is with us as ministers: when we can rest satisfied with using the means for saving souls without seeing them *really saved*, or we ourselves being broken-hearted by it, and at the same time quietly talk of leaving the event to God's disposal, we make use of a truth to cover and excuse a falsehood; for our ability to leave the matter thus is not, as we imagine, the result of *heart submission to God*, but to *heart indifference to the salvation of the souls* we deal with. No truly; if *the heart* is really set on such an end it must *gain* that end, or *break* in *losing* it.

Whether a minister *ought* to be satisfied with using the means to save souls, without seeing them actually saved is certainly a question,—a question, too, that can be answered only by referring to the word of God. Now, an examination of Scripture will plainly show, that it is *not* the mind of God a minister should be satisfied without seeing the fruit of His labour. Our blessed Lord intimates that the *object* for which He sends His ministers into the world is the same as that for which the Father sent Himself into the world; “as thou hast sent *me* into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” John xvii. 18. For what did the Father send His Son into the world? It was to seek and to save that which *was lost*. The *object*, therefore, for which Christ sends His ministers into the world is to *save lost souls*. Can it be agreeable to the mind of God, then, that *ministers* should be satisfied without obtaining the *very end* for which they have been sent by Him? If

the very purpose for which Christ has chosen and ordained them is, as he expressly states, that they should go, and *bring forth fruit*, and that their fruit should remain, it is quite clear it cannot be the mind of Christ that those ministers should be satisfied *without fruit*, John xv. 16. Surely there is enough in this to warrant every minister of Christ in expecting fruit, and enough to forbid his being satisfied without fruit. Does not God declare respecting His prophets under the old covenant, that if they *had* stood in His counsel, they *should* have turned his people from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings, Jerem. xxiii. 22; and is it not asserted of the priests that when the law of truth was in their mouth, and iniquity was not found in their lips, and they walked with the Lord in truth and equity, they *did* turn many away from iniquity, Malac. ii. 6.? Was success thus promised by God to faithful ministers under the old covenant, and actually obtained by them, whilst the Holy Ghost was not yet given; and are we to credit that the ministers of Christ, under the new covenant, when the Holy Ghost *is* given, should be satisfied *without* success, and that it is the mind of God they *ought to be*? Impossible! Success, that is, the actual salvation of souls is the very object for which they have been chosen and sent forth by Christ; success is the very object they ought to have in view; success is that without which they ought never to be satisfied.

We should immediately detect, in other things, the absurdity of a man's being satisfied with using the means, though he did not obtain the end. Would the husbandman be satisfied with *sowing*, though he should *not reap*; or would the fisherman be satisfied with *fishing*, though he should *take no fish*? is it not strange, that we should see at once the absurdity of this, and yet that we cannot see how equally absurd it is that they who *sow spiritually* should be satisfied though they do *not reap spiritually*, and

that they who have been made fishers of men's souls should be satisfied though they do not *take souls*? To be satisfied with using means without obtaining the end would in ordinary, and even trivial affairs, be esteemed a mark of folly, if not worse: then how can it be accounted for that in matters of the most solemn import this should be regarded as a part of wisdom, and in accordance with the mind of God. Is there any principle that can explain this inconsistency? Yes, there is *one* and but one: it is this, *the truth*, that there are but few ministers who *realize in their hearts* that the great object *and end* for which they have been put in the ministry is to *save souls*; and in failing to do this they fail to fulfil the object for which they were ordained. When a minister does indeed realize this great truth in his heart, the means without the end will *not* content him: it will not be enough for him that he preaches the truth, that his sermons are admired, and his conduct approved, that his congregations are overflowing, and his schools flourishing, that his Bible classes and prayer meetings are well attended, and his various societies well ordered, and that he himself is diligent and regular in the performance of all his ministerial duties;—No; to such an one all these things without *conversion* will be *nothing*: such an one will *not be satisfied* with *anything* short of the *salvation of souls*.

That one who does not profess to believe that men in general are hurrying on to everlasting destruction, and to whom regeneration and conversion appear as flights of fancy or enthusiasm,—that such an one should be satisfied without seeing any fruit of his labours is consistent: but that one who professes to believe that the multitudes around him are going down to hell, and that he is sent to save them from it,—that *he* should be *satisfied* without their *really being saved*, is so very inconsistent that it can be explained only by the circumstance of his not

realizing as a truth with his heart what he receives as a doctrine with his head. Nor can a minister whose heart is really set on the salvation of lost souls as the great object for which he has been sent by Christ rest satisfied without conversions, under the plea of having cast his bread upon the waters in the hope that he may find it after many days: though such an one will not withhold his hand from sowing seed, even where there is not the slightest prospect at the time of its producing fruit: and the writer would suggest whether this be not the proper application of the text referred to, Eccles. xi. 1. ;—yet the necessity of sowing on some occasions with a very uncertain prospect of success will not prevent him from looking for, or make him better able to be satisfied without success from his ministry in general. Moreover, if the heart be *really* set on the salvation of souls as the great object of the ministry, the absence of success will stir up the soul of the minister to still more earnestness, greater anxiety, and more fervent prayer for the conversion of his people; certainly, it will not leave him *satisfied* without fruit; for it will make him more *dissatisfied* than ever with himself and his ministry, and so deeply affected with the sight of the dying souls around him, that he will be ready to weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of his people. Such was the earnest anxiety—might we not say, the agony—of St. Paul for the real conversion of men's souls, that he could find no mode of speech so adapted to express it as by declaring that he actually *travailed in birth* of them until Christ was formed in them. Gal. iv. 19.

Though success may not for a time attend the use of means, yet if the heart of the minister be *really* set on the salvation of souls, the absence of success will invariably produce the following effect: so far from leaving him satisfied, it will lead him to conclude there is something amiss in himself or his

ministry to which the want of success is to be attributed. If the husbandman was to sow without reaping any fruit, or comparatively little, and continue so to do, would he not naturally conclude there must be some fault in the seed he sowed, his mode of sowing it, or his culture of the ground on which he sowed? Would he not with full purpose of heart set himself to discover what the error was, and where it lay, and would he, or *could* he, be *satisfied* till it had been discovered and removed? In like manner would not the fisherman who had little or no success in fishing suspect he did not fish aright, or that his nets were out of order; and would he be *satisfied* till this was discovered and amended? We see the reasonableness of the conclusion, and of the conduct following, in these cases; and is it not equally reasonable that the minister who is spiritually both a husbandman and fisherman, should, when he has laboured on with little or no success, conclude there is some error in himself, the means he uses, or the manner of his using them, and should he rest contented till the error is discovered and removed? Does he not go forth with an object and an end as specific and express as theirs, and are not the means he uses just as much adapted to obtain the end as theirs? Then why should he be satisfied without it? No; if his heart be *really* set upon that end he will *not* be satisfied without it. How express is the promise of success made to Timothy, and in him, to every minister of Christ! Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all;—or, in all things;—take heed unto thyself; and unto the doctrine; for, in doing this, *thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee*, 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16. This Scripture warrants every faithful minister to expect success; and where success, that is, the conversion of sinners, does not attend our ministry, it furnishes a clue to the *discovery of what prevents it*. Let such a minister

enquire of God and his own heart, whether he do really give himself *wholly* to these things. Let him consider how much is implied in that word *wholly*: the question is not whether he give himself *partly*, or even a *great deal* to these things; but whether he do give himself *wholly* to them, so as to give himself to *nothing else*. Is the edification of his own soul, and the salvation of his hearers, the *only* thing he is *concerned* about; or, at least, is his concern about these so genuine as to swallow up, and utterly absorb his concern about all other things? Does he give himself *so wholly* to these things as to make *every* thing give way to them? Does he really and truly drown all regard for his own personal ease, prosperity, domestic comfort, and convenience, his family and friends, in the absorbing desire and concern for the salvation of his hearers? Are friends, family, fortune, health, comfort, reputation, *all*, laid down at the feet of Christ, and actually offered as a sacrifice upon the altar of the name of Jesus? In a word, does he in truth count not his life dear unto himself, so that he may finish his course with joy, and the ministry he has received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God? If it be not thus with him, can it with truth be said that he gives himself *wholly* to these things?

But, in the mind of the apostle, or, more correctly speaking, in the mind of God, it is not enough, in order to his saving souls, that a minister give himself wholly to these things: he must take heed unto *himself*, and to his *doctrine* (or teaching.) If one may conclude so from the extension of religious knowledge, it is the *former* part of this precept that deserves our more particular attention. It appears that in our day much more heed is given by ministers to their *doctrine* than to *themselves*. Indeed, the consciousness that they do preach sound doctrine, and use the other means, seems to be that which enables many ministers to maintain a quiet mind.

and to continue satisfied with their ministry, even though their hearers are not saved. Now, this would not be the case did they fully receive the conviction, that it is quite as indispensable, in order to the salvation of their hearers, that they should give heed to *themselves* as much as to their doctrine; and that anything amiss in *them* will interfere with the great end as effectually as any error in their doctrine. The great importance of this point will appear more clearly if we consider the *relation* in which a minister, and the means he uses, stand to the souls of men. What is a minister but a *vessel* to convey the waters of eternal life by? and what are the means he uses but *channels* through which those waters are to be conducted to the souls of men? *These* be the "golden pipes" through which the "golden oil" is to pass; and *ministers* be the "olive branches" by which the pipes are to be supplied. Zech. iv. 12. But of what value is the vessel if it have not water in it, or what are the channels without the streams that ought to flow through them? Is it enough to have "olive branches" and "pipes,"—albeit they be *anointed* olive trees, and *golden* pipes,—without the *golden oil* of God's grace be in them? Neither, then, is it enough that we have ministers and means of grace, without *grace itself* be actually supplied by them. It is true a minister must take heed unto his *doctrine* that it be sound, and to the *means* that they be adapted to the end; for God will not convey His golden oil through any but a *golden* pipe: this, however, is only one part of the minister's duty, and by far the smaller portion too: the first and most important point is to take heed unto *himself*; to see, not merely that there are "golden pipes," but that he, as the "olive branch," and the "anointed one," is actually *supplying them with golden oil*. The golden pipes were supplied with the golden oil, not from the golden candlestick direct, but *through the olive branches which were themselves* supplied from the golden

candlestick, on either side of which they stood. Zech. iv. 11, 12. Here we observe that the *medium* through which "the golden pipes" were to be supplied with "golden oil" were the *olive branches*; so that if the "golden pipes" at any time were empty it must be owing to some fault in the "olive branches." Just so, the medium between the fountain of life and the means for conveying life is the *minister*; and when sound doctrine and well ordered means have not *life in them*,—and this is the reason why they are not fruitful—it is because there is something amiss in the medium through which they ought to be supplied,—that is, the *minister*.

Do ministers sufficiently consider that *they* are the medium through which the means of grace are to be supplied with grace from God? that *they* are the "olive branches" through which the "golden pipes" are to be supplied with "golden oil" from the "golden candlestick?" Surely this is not sufficiently considered: if it were, ministers could not possibly be satisfied with using the means without obtaining the end, and say, they are leaving the event to God. No, they would perceive that *means* are in themselves nothing more than *hollow-pipes*, and that when the end to which they are adapted is not answered it is because the *pipes are empty*,—that is, because the means have *no life in them*; and they would also understand that whilst it is indeed their business to procure the "golden pipes," it is equally *their* business, and certainly their most important business, to supply those "golden pipes" with "golden oil." The two "olive trees" stood *by* the "golden candlestick," one on either side of it; indeed, so very *near* to it as to receive the "golden oil" from it: now, these be the "anointed ones," the ministers. Zech. iv. 2, 3, 11—14. The great business of the minister, therefore, is to take heed unto *himself*, that he is standing in such *nearness to God*, and so close to the fountain of life

as to be receiving the "golden oil" of God's grace from God Himself to fill the "golden pipes" with, and so to furnish *life* to dying souls. Such is the nature of the connection between God as the fountain of life, ministers as the medium of life, means of grace as the channels of life, and human souls as the recipients of life! and such is the necessity of this connection being preserved, that if any part of it be broken, the flow of life to dying souls is interrupted. There must be souls as *vessels* to receive the golden oil; there must be means of grace as *golden pipes* to convey the golden oil; there must be ministers of some sort as *olive branches* to supply the golden pipes with golden oil; and there must be God as a *living fountain* to furnish golden oil for the whole. Where all parts of this spiritual machinery are supplied, there (unless some part of the machinery be out of order) the *end* to which it is adapted will really be obtained;—*souls really will be converted, sinners really will be saved, God really will be glorified!*

The truth must be told; confession must be made; *that* part of the machinery which is mostly out of order are the *olive branches*; it is *we*, the "anointed ones," that are in fault; the "golden pipes" are provided, but they themselves are not supplied with "golden oil" by the "olive branches;" and why? because the "olive trees" do not keep their proper standing by the "golden candlestick;" they are not *near* to it enough to receive the "golden oil" from it to supply the "golden pipes." The real truth is—ministers do not live sufficiently *near* to God; their *walk* with God is not *close enough*; their *intercourse* with God is not *frequent enough*; their *communion* with God is not *deep enough*, and therefore they do not receive from God *life enough* to fill the "golden pipes" with "golden oil" to give life to dying souls. There is in most of us a *lightness of manner*, a worldliness of mind, an

allowedness of the flesh, and a regard to our personal ease, comfort, and convenience, which are in direct opposition to that serious mind, that self-denying spirit, and that habitual crucifixion of the flesh which are indispensably necessary to a close walk, and a deep and spiritual communion with God: and if some of us are more outwardly devoted than others; if our doctrine be more sound, our preaching more scriptural, and our use of outward means more diligent and zealous, it is to be feared that even we are greatly wanting in that *inward* and *spiritual* devotion to which alone the rest must owe its value. Most of us are taking more heed to fit out our pipes well, than to supply them with oil; and some of us are even excusing our deficiency in the latter by pleading the attention we are giving to the former. Certain it is, however, that no degree of attention to external duties, no zeal in outward engagements, can ever compensate for, or supply the place of, that frequent, fervent, persevering prayer,—that inward devotion, spiritual life, and holy walk, that near living, close-dealing, and deep communion with God which constitute the beginning, the middle, and I had almost said the *end*, of ministerial power, and by which alone the minister can *draw life from God to give it to his people*.

It is far from the intention of the writer to *discourage* any minister by setting up so high a standard of ministerial attainment: and if, in the course of these remarks, he has said some things that must bear hard on his ministerial brethren, he desires to assure them it is not because he is wanting in feelings of respect for them; but simply because he really does discern them to be true, and believe that they require to be spoken. He hopes too, that he has not merely spoken the truth, but that he has spoken it *in love*; and he trusts that the Spirit of truth will Himself bear witness to it as the truth, by applying it with power to the heart of many a

minister who reads it. Doubtless it is a great work to fit a minister for saving souls ; and doubtless it is a great work for a minister to save them ; but as He is a great God who has to do both the one and the other, the greatness of the work need not discourage us. No, we ought never to be discouraged whilst we have a *Trinity*,—and *such* a Trinity ; a Father so faithful to supply us, a Saviour so condescending to support us, and a Spirit so good to guide us. Let a minister *desire* success, let him confidently *expect* success, let him *persevere* in using diligently all the means adapted to procure success, and let him *continue so to do* until he *has* success ;—let him not be *discouraged* if God for a time *withholds* success ; neither let him “ be *weary* in well doing ” if God sees fit to *put a death upon the means* he is using to obtain success, for He usually does this *just before He gives success*, that the minister may clearly know *from whence* it comes ; let him resolve not to be *satisfied* with any thing *but* success ;—he cannot *go without* success ;—for God hath said it : he shall *assuredly obtain* success—for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. He saith to every minister ; “ Meditate upon these things ; give thyself *wholly* to them ; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine ; continue in them : for *in doing this*, thou shalt both *save thyself, and them that hear thee.* ” 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.

It is a comfort to the writer, and doubtless, will be a satisfaction to the reader, to be informed by a letter from their pastor, that the believers at Charl-
linch still continue to walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

H. J. P.

Stoke by Clare, near Halstead,
Suffolk. August 18th, 1842.

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